Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

In a week's time, how often do you visit any CNMI government-owned website?

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INSIDE

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The Marianas Eye Institute holds a free vision checkup for the *man'amko*. ➤ PAGE 6

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Rep. Gabrielle Giffords says she intends to resign from Congress. ➤ PAGE 14

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Laura Dekker ends a yearlong voyage around the globe aboard a sailboat. ➤ PAGE 19

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ACCORDING TO MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET:

2013 budget likely at $102M, again

» Lawmakers say the same level better than 'lower' budget

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration expects the fiscal year 2013 budget to remain stagnant at the fiscal year 2012 level of $102 million, according to special assistant for management and budget Virginia Villagomez.

And it's not just the amount that is expected to remain static. According to Villagomez, the same austerity measures that are currently in place will also be retained.

That $102-million level is nearly similar to what the Commonwealth was generating some 22 years ago. Some lawmakers believe, however, that maintaining $102 million is still better than a lower budget, which could mean further work hour cuts and further reduced pub-

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KUNG HEI FAT CHOI!

CLARISSA V. DAVID

A dancer from the Chinese Association of Saipan performs the traditional lion dance amid exploding firecrackers at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday. Chinese, Japanese, and Korean communities around the world celebrated the Lunar New Year on Jan. 23, signaling the arrival of the Year of the Dragon, the fifth sign in the Chinese zodiac.

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Battle for control of Asia's seas goes underwater

By ERIC TALMADGE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

YOKOSUKA, Japan (AP)—It's getting a bit more crowded under the sea in Asia, where Andrew Peterson commands one of the world's mightiest weapons: a $2 billion nuclear submarine with unrivaled stealth and missiles that can devastate targets hundreds of miles (kilometers) away.

Super high-tech submarines like

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In this April 23, 2009 file photo, a Chinese Navy nuclear-powered submarine sails during an international fleet review in the waters off Qingdao, China, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of People's Liberation Army Navy. AP

CUC, GEORGETOWN AGREE:

Rate hike for water, electric base charges; slight reduction in LEAC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the consultant for the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission have filed a joint petition yesterday that seeks increases for both water and wastewater and electric base charges, while recommending a slight reduction in the levelized energy adjustment clause, or LEAC.

The commission is expected to act on all these matters at its

See RATE HIKE on Page 4

Local

Firecrackers, lion dances usher in Lunar New Year

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Time-honored festivities ushering in the Chinese New Year, also called Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival, rolled into action Monday in a tapestry of rich and colorful customs and practices among the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans on Saipan.

The Chinese Association of Saipan was at the forefront of yesterday's celebration, organizing special lion dance performances that are believed to bring luck and prosperity to business establishments throughout the island.

Spectators at various locations were in a festive mood, enjoying the colorful presentation of the Chinese Association dancers who put on the gold and silver lion-head costumes as they spun and twirled to the jangling beat of drums and cymbals.

The traditional lion dances were coupled with thunderous firecrackers to ward off evil spirits. At the Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan, the lion dancers were riveting as they gyrated near lit firecrackers that were strung all the way up to the ceiling.

Hyatt general manager Nick Nishikawa said it's been a tradition at the hotel to invite the lion dancers and light up firecrackers, and this year is especially meaningful because of the dragon year. "The lion dance brings us hope for a better, more stable year filled with peace and good health for us," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Michael Umali, Sablan Topline Co.'s housekeeping supervisor for Hyatt, said he joins the fireworks celebration at the hotel but at home, his family observes quieter Lunar New Year traditions such as preparing sweet and sticky delicacies, which symbolize unity.

"There's nothing wrong if you follow what the Chinese have been doing for centuries. I believe anyone can have good luck as long as you believe and pray," he added.

At the Canton Restaurant in Garapan, which was filled with diners, the lion dancers made their way inside the kitchen and dining area where customers "fed" the lions with red money envelope, called *hong bao*, for good luck.

Guam resident Anna Lansangan, who is on island with her children and mother-in-law, said the Chinese New Year festivities are a welcome bonus for her family on their weeklong visit. When asked how they will celebrate the propitious occasion, she replied: "We plan to eat Chinese food!"

James Ban, a Chinese national who has been on island for 19 years, said he always hopes to have a better year each New Year.

For this New Year, Lani Xu Carlson made sure that her 6-year-old daughter Angela would learn more about her Chinese roots by being with friends and enjoying traditional food even after the stroke of midnight on Monday.

"She enjoyed the food, the colorful fireworks, and the company of our friends in welcoming the New Year," said Carlson.

Like many others, Carlson remains optimistic that the Year of the Dragon will bring a better economy to achieve the long-awaited progress in the CNMI. "We all know that last year was not good, so hopefully, we will see improvements this year."

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Traditional lion dancers reach for a cabbage hung on the ceiling during their performance at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday.

Senate, House poised to override veto of foreign corp. tax bill

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Senate and the House of Representatives are poised to override the governor's veto of a bill seeking to provide tax rate for foreign corporations earning income from outside of the CNMI, after a House legal opinion concluded that the proposed taxes do not violate the terms of the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth in political union with the United States.

One of the items on the Senate's session agenda for today is the vetoed measure, House Bill 17-163, Senate Draft 2, Conference Committee Substitute 1.

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), author of the bill, said the House will also have its session this week to, among other things, override then acting governor Eloy S. Inos's veto of the measure, which he said is a revenue-generating bill that could help infuse fresh cash to the CNMI economy.

The acting governor, in his veto message on Dec. 1, said the proposed changes to the Northern Marianas territorial income tax structure violate Covenant restrictions to limit rebates to CNMI-sourced income and case law, which prohibits changes by insular areas that have adopted the U.S. tax code.

But a Jan. 17 memo from House legal counsel John Cool states that while he concurs with the acting governor's conclusion that local amendments to Chapter 7 Tax (NMTIT) are not permissible, the acting governor "erroneously characterizes the tax on 'Net Foreign Income' as being under NMTIT Chapter 7.'"

The House legal counsel, as well as Basa, said the new tax proposed by the bill on "Net Foreign Income" is added under Chapter 5, Miscellaneous Taxes and License Fees, not Chapter 7 (NMTIT).

"HB 17-163, SD2, CCS1 does not amend Chapter 7 (NMTIT) and does not violate the Covenant 602," Cool said.

The bill proposes a 10-percent tax imposed on "Net Foreign Income."

Following the sourcing rules of the NMTIT, the "Net Foreign Income" would not be included in gross income taxable under the NMTIT. None of the "Net Foreign Income" is derived from sources within the U.S. or the CNMI under the NMTIT income sourcing rules.

However, if it were determined that the "Net Foreign In-

See SENATE on Page 4

Man who beat up girlfriend gets 6-day sentence

A man accused of beating up his girlfriend in front of their two children at their residence in Chalan Lau Lau pleaded guilty last week and was sentenced to six days in prison.

In his written order issued Thursday, Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Schneider Techur Lanzo to six months in prison, all suspended except for six days, with credit for the three days he has already spent in jail. He was set to be released from prison yesterday at 8am.

Lanzo will be placed on supervised probation for a year and required to perform 100 hours of community service, complete anger management counseling, submit to alcohol and drug assessment, and write a letter of apology to the victim.

Wiseman also ordered the defendant to pay a $300 fine, $25 court assessment fee, plus probation fee.

The 26-year-old Lanzo pleaded guilty to assault and battery.

According to the plea agreement, on May 3, 1011, on Saipan, Lanzo "unlawfully struck, beat, wounded, or otherwise caused bodily harm" to the victim.

A police report states that the victim was crying when a police officer arrived at the house. The officer observed that the victim had a scratch mark on the face and a small lump on the head.

According to the victim, she was putting her 7-month-old baby to sleep when Lanzo threw a pillow at her and punched her in the head. The victim bit Lanzo on the leg. He then slapped her several times in the face.

Their 1-year-old son and 7-month-old daughter were both crying during the attack. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Marianas Coffee Trail Run

One of the regions most invigorating early morning runs returns to the Northern Marianas this Saturday (Jan. 28) with the 5th Marianas Coffee Trail Run.

The event will feature a 10K short course and a longer course through some of Saipan's most challenging and scenic terrain. Beginning and finishing at Micro Beach at American Memorial Park, the race rises 1,500 feet to the highest point on the island-Mt. Tapochau-following twists and turns through the mountaintop before returning to the finish line. The course takes runners through wild coffee plantations planted in the Japanese-colonial era of the island and through the young coffee groves of sponsor Marianas Coffee Co. Competitors will also be rewarded with sweeping panoramas of the Pacific Ocean and Philippine Sea.

Registration is $25 for ages 12 and under and $40 for ages 13 and above. All participants will receive a finisher's t-shirt, certificate of participation, and free entry to the awards banquet. The banquet will be held at Micro Beach at 11:30 a.m. on race day. Registration forms are now available at the MVA office in Oleai. For more information, contact Ed Diaz of the MVA at ediaz@mymarianas.com or 1.670.664.3210.

Awards, including Marianas Coffee giveaways, will be given to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers in the male and female divisions. Walkers for the 10K are also welcomed.

The event is also sponsored by KFC Triathlon Club Japan, TEAM PDI, and Northern Marianas Athletics.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
Division of Environmental Quality DEQ CNMI

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

Fitial admin no reapportionment plan yet, seeks AG opinion

» Yumul also seeks written opinion from House counsel

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that the Fitial administration does not have a House of Representatives seat reapportionment or redistricting plan in place yet but is seeking the attorney general's opinion on whether the 120-day period for the Legislature to come up with a plan started on Aug. 24 or Jan. 5. There were two sets of U.S. Census Bureau data released around these dates.

If an attorney general opinion concludes that the 120-day period from the release of Census 2010 data started on Aug. 24 then that means the Legislature has already lost its chance to plan for reapportionment or redistricting by Christmas time, and the second 120-day period is now ticking for the governor to come up with his own plan.

The governor also has 120 days after the expiration of the time for the Legislature to act on the matter.

"All the factors are there that are pointing to a right-sized government and this is one significant point to do, to go in that direction," Demapan said, referring to a 22.7-percent decline in the CNMI's population and a shrinking economy, among other things.

The CNMI population shrunk by 22.2 percent or by 15,338 in a 10-year period or from 69,221 in 2000 to 53,883 in 2010, resulting from a host of factors that include a series of economic setbacks, the demise of the garment industry, and the unremitting drop in tourist arrivals.

Saipan's population alone dipped by 22.7 percent or by 14,172—from 62,392 in 2000 to 48,220 in 2010.

If both the Legislature and the Executive branches do not act on the constitutional requirement to reapportion and redistrict after the Census results are published, then any registered voter could petition the Judiciary to make a decision, as was the case in 2007.

Demapan said if the Legislature's 120-day period had already lapsed, lawmakers can still submit its own plan to the Fitial administration.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan), who brought up the constitutional provisions on reapportionment and redistricting on Friday, separately said yesterday that this time around, he will seek a written legal opinion from the House counsel.

U.S. Census Bureau data on the results of the Census 2010 were released on Aug. 24 that included the CNMI's population count and population by districts.

Another set of Census 2010 data results were released around Jan. 5 that included the population of each village.

Yumul said an initial opinion from the House counsel was that the 120 days started on Jan. 5, not August so this means the Legislature still has until May to come up with its plan.

"Now that the AG is asked to review it, the Legislature also has to come up with its own position on when the 120 days started. The Constitution gives the Legislature authority to act on it, and we should not lose that chance to do so," Yumul said.

He said if legal opinions conclude that the Legislature's 120-day period has already lapsed, the Legislature can still act on Rep. Joseph Palacios' (R-Saipan) initiative seeking to reduce the number of House seats for Saipan from 18 to nine and designate Saipan as one election district instead of five. This means Saipan House members will be elected islandwide, not by precinct.

Yumul

Demapan

Currently, the House has 20 members: 18 from Saipan, and one each from Rota and Tinian.

Palacios said his initiative will save the CNMI over $1 million.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), for his part, said yesterday that "the Legislature should do it. I don't want the Executive Branch to do [the redistricting]."

Palacios' initiative has yet to be acted on by the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations—almost a year since it was introduced in February 2011. JGO Committee chair Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) said he personally supports the initiative but he has to get consensus on the matter. He said the committee will soon act on the initiative.

Under Article II Section 4(a) of the CNMI Constitution, the Legislature shall, at least every 10 years and within 120 days following publication of the results of the decennial census, reapportion the seats in the House or revise the districts for electing representatives as required by changes in Commonwealth population or by law.

Section 4(b) states that if the Legislature fails to act, the governor shall promulgate a reapportionment or redistricting plan within 120 days after the expiration of the time for the Legislature to act.

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CNMI reaffirms support for Marshall Islands

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The CNMI reaffirmed its support for the Republic of the Marshall Islands during the inauguration of its new president, Christopher Loeak, on Jan. 17, press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday.

Demapan was Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's official representative to the Marshall Islands president's inauguration, attended by many of the members of the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit.

"The governor's message to the new president was one that is centered on continuing the working relationship that was established beforehand with the president of the Marshall Islands and with the other chief executives in the region," Demapan told reporters yesterday.

He said the CNMI's presence during the inauguration signaled the "continuity" of the working relationship between the CNMI and the Marshall Islands.

Demapan said Fitial had originally planned to travel to the Marshall Islands for Loeak's inauguration.

However, at the time, Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos was still off-island on medical leave so the governor decided to stay in the CNMI and sent Demapan instead to represent him.

If the governor and lieutenant governor are both off-island, the Senate president could be acting governor.

BUDGET

From Page 1

lic services.

"Revenue projections for the budget year are not yet available; however, we expect it will be at the same level as the current year of $102 million," Villagomez said in her budget call memo.

Austerity measures such as 16-hour cuts biweekly and unpaid holidays will still be in place in fiscal year 2013, which runs from Oct. 1, 2012, to Sept. 30, 2013.

Villagomez asked Executive Branch department and activity heads to prepare and submit their 2013 budget requests no later than Feb. 29. Extensions will not be allowed under any circumstances, she said.

They are asked to eliminate costs that are "unaffordable" and programs that are "unnecessary."

The CNMI government's budget peaked at $247 million in 1997 with both the tourism and garment industries in full throttle. Subsequent events such as the demise of the garment industry and the pullout of Japan Airlines ate into the budget until it reached only $191 million in 2006 and steadily dropped. By 2011, it was only $122 million before barely clinging to the $100-million mark of $102 million in the current fiscal year of 2012.

Villagomez said the Feb. 29 deadline to submit budget requests will give the Office of Management and Budget sufficient time to evaluate the requests and meet with each agency during the week of March 12 through March 15.

The governor has an April 1 deadline to submit a proposed budget to the Legislature.

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan) said it would be too early for him as House Ways and Means Committee chairman to work on the fiscal year 2013 bill without actually receiving the governor's proposed budget.

Basa noted that in fiscal year 2011, the administration's revenue projection fell short by "only" $565,456.

"I think that's pretty close to the projected revenue and so for the following fiscal year, the projections may be close to actual revenue," said Basa, adding that it was the overspending that was the major reason for a budget deficit of over $25.8 million in fiscal year 2001.

Basa said he shares Tan Holdings president Jerry Tan's optimism about the economy once additional airline seats from Japan are in place, and hopes that there will be more revenue available for government operations.

"I think there are signs that 2012 will be a lot better than 2011. We heard about additional airline seats from Japan as what Jerry Tan said, and we heard about exporting local produce to Guam through a cargo airline. If all those materialize, we will have more revenue for public service," he said.

While there are lots of businesses that have shut down, Basa said that there are also new investments in the horizon.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), for his part, said if the projected revenues available for government operation remain the same, then the CNMI was able to survive the effects of the March 2011 triple disasters in Japan, which is the CNMI's main tourism market, among other things.

But Tenorio said it is not enough that the CNMI maintains the same budget level.

"If that's the same budget, it means austerity will continue. That's not the way to run a government. We need to bring in new investors. Having casinos here will do that," said the former governor and speaker. Tenorio strongly supports legalizing casino gaming on Saipan.

'Remain vigilant'

OMB's Villagomez, in her two-page budget call memo, said although they have seen some positive results in their preliminary analysis of first quarter collections—covering October to December 2011 or the first quarter of FY 2012—"we will remain vigilant in the upcoming months to determine if we will maintain our current level or make further adjustments to be able to balance our 2013 submission."

She said agencies will be promptly informed if a substantial adjustment will be necessary within the next 45 days once the Department of Finance finalizes the actual revenue report.

"This past fiscal year, we learned how difficult it was to operate within the very limited resources available. With the exception of a few, some departments and agencies have demonstrated fiscal responsibility by controlling expenditures within means. This effort must continue as you formulate your budget and spending plans for fiscal year 2013," Villagomez said.

Departments and agencies are asked to include the calculation of government contributions as follows: health insurance; life insurance at 1.6 percent; retirement-Defined Benefit Plan at 37.39 percent; retirement-Defined Contribution Plan at 4 percent; and Medicare at 1.45 percent.

Agencies are also asked to include a brief description of their programs, goals, and objectives, a complete justification of each budgeted category, their department's accomplishments in the previous fiscal year, and their anticipated accomplishments in 2013.

RATE HIKE

From Page 1

scheduled meeting this week, in anticipation of its closure by Jan. 29 due to the lack of commissioners.

CUC and Georgetown Consulting want the new water and wastewater rate structure to become effective on Feb. 12 this year.

"The initial water electric charge, as recommended, is forecast to produce $4.56 million on an annualized basis. The initial wastewater electric charge is forecast to produce $2.71 million on an annualized basis. The overall revenue increase, as a result of these structural changes to the current water and wastewater rates is forecast to be $4.228 million on annualized basis," the CUC/Georgetown agreement states.

In a statement yesterday CUC cited four reasons for its rate hike for water and wastewater rates: power cost increases; stipulated order requirements; declining customer base; and operating cost increases.

The new charge will only be adjusted once CUC's LEAC or MFAC (the monthly fuel adjustment clause) electric rate is changed. CUC is also petitioning the commission to change LEAC model to MFAC.

If this rate increase proposal is approved, a residential user of 10,000 gallons of water per month will see an average $12.32 increase in his or her monthly charges; for residential users of 10,000 gallons of wastewater service per month, the increase in his or her monthly charges will amount to $39.76.

According to CUC, majority of residential ratepayers use 10,000 gallons of water and wastewater service or less per month. CUC has about 9,904 water customers and 2,887 wastewater customers.

CUC and Georgetown described this rate proposal as "just and reasonable."

Electric base rate and LEAC

The joint petition also proposes a rate increase for CUC's electric base rate effective Feb. 27, 2012. This is expected to generate an additional $3.72 million annually. CUC and Georgetown believe that this increase is necessary to enable CUC's electric division to meet its financial obligations.

They cited four reasons for seeking the rate change: the significant decrease in billed usage that must be adjusted; substantial increase in retirement contribution this fiscal year from 37 percent to 61 percent; the need to account for Commonwealth Development Authority dividend payments beginning 2012; and the additional expenses that must be paid for as a result of the adoption of Telesource's change order no. 5.

If this rate proposal is adopted, the average impact for a residential user of 250 kWh per month is to see a $1.89 increase in his or her monthly charges; for residential user of 500 kWh per month, the impact is $2.64. According to CUC, majority of residential ratepayers use 500 kWh or less per month.

For the LEAC, CUC/Georgetown proposes lowering the existing LEAC rate of $0.30791 to $0.03071 per kWh. LEAC reflects fuel consumption and related costs. CUC said 78 percent of its budget is spent on fuel.

SENATE

From Page 2

come" was sourced in the CNMI and subject to the NMTIT, the amount of the tax would be subject to the rebate offset amount of 100 percent.

The Legislature has until the end of this month to override the governor's veto of the bill.

BATTLE

From Page 1

Cmdr. Peterson's USS *Oklahoma City* have long been the envy of navies all over the globe—and a key component of U.S. military strategy.

"We really have no peer," Peterson told The Associated Press during a recent port call in Japan.

But America's submarine dominance in the Pacific is facing its biggest challenge since the Cold War. Nearly every Asian country with a coastline is fortifying its submarine fleet amid territorial disputes stirred up by an increasingly assertive China and the promise of bountiful natural resources.

Submarines are difficult to find and hard to destroy. Even fairly crude submarine forces can attack surface ships or other targets with a great deal of stealth, making them perfect for countries with limited resources. The threat of such an attack is a powerful deterrent in Asia, where coastal defenses are vital.

"This is shaping up as an intense arms race," said Lyle Goldstein, an associate professor at the China Maritime Studies Institute of the U.S. Naval War College. "This arms race is not simply China versus the rest—though that explains much of it—because there are other rivalries here as well."

China is pouring money into enlarging and modernizing its fleet, and India is planning to get a nuclear-powered attack submarine—the INS Chakra—on a 10-year lease from Russia as early as this month.

Australia is debating its most-expensive defense project ever—a submarine upgrade that could cost more than 36 billion dollars.

Japan is adding another eight to its 16-boat fleet. South Korea is selling them to Indonesia. Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan and even Bangladesh either now have or are planning to acquire subs.

North Korea, which has a large fleet of mini-subs, allegedly put them to deadly use in 2010—killing 46 South Korean sailors in the worst clash since their war ended in 1953.

The trend has a momentum of its own—once one country gets submarines, its neighbors are under pressure to follow suit, lest they give up a strategic advantage. But the rush to build up submarine forces also underscores a growing awareness of the region's potential riches.

Roughly half of the goods transported between continents by ship go through the South China Sea, accounting for $1.2 trillion in U.S. trade annually. The area has vast, largely untapped natural resources—including oil reserves of seven billion barrels and an estimated 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

"The geostrategic significance of the South China Sea is difficult to overstate," said a report this month by the Center for a New American Security, a private think tank based in Washington DC. "To the extent that the world economy has a geographical center, it is in the South China Sea."

With the decline of Russia, the U.S. remains the top nation with a significant capability to operate submarines in the open seas—a crucial advantage if Washington wants to maintain its role in keeping key sea lanes and chokepoints like the Malacca Strait, which connects the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific, free for commercial trade.

The U.S. Navy's blue water superiority is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Peterson, the Oklahoma City skipper, said the Navy's workhorse Los Angeles-class subs remain a cut above the rest. "The beauty is that they are still the state of the art."

But, closer to shore, China is challenging the status quo.

"China has put a major emphasis on submarines, with the result that the PLA Navy submarine force is now, along with the Chinese missile forces, one of the sharpest arrows in China's quiver of military capabilities," Goldstein said.

China now has more than 60 subs in its navy, including nine that are nuclear-powered, according to the Pentagon's annual overview last year.

Its mainstay boats are diesel-powered Song-class vessels, but it also is developing more advanced nuclear-powered attack and ballistic submarines, including the Jin class that would carry missiles with a range of 4,600 miles (7,400 kilometers). Nuclear-powered subs can operate longer submerged than their diesel counterparts.

China has a long way to go to match the U.S. Navy—the advanced Jin subs, for example, would have to be well into the Japan Sea for the continental United States to be within their range—and Goldstein said that Beijing's threat has been overblown.

To keep its edge, however, the United States now has more submarines in the Pacific than in the Atlantic. With the military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan wrapping up, the Obama administration has also announced a "pivot to the Pacific" strategy that will likely further boost U.S. naval resources in the region.

Even so, China is just one player in an increasingly complicated game.

"Everybody's buying subs, but not for the same reasons," said Owen Cote, associate director of MIT's Security Studies Program.

The Pacific is dotted by scores of disputed islands, and who controls what part of the seas is a potentially explosive question. Japan has rival claims with China, South Korea and Russia. A half dozen countries claim rights to the remote Spratly Islands.

"Vietnam and the other states abutting the South China Sea want to have the option to contest a Chinese decision to resolve the various boundary issues that divide them by force," Cote said. "The Chinese have an interest in using submarines in preventing U.S. surface ships from intervening on behalf of one of these neighbors in such a conflict."

As regional navies get stronger, so does the potential for armed clashes.

Fund's assets in cash account now at $105 million

» Board expected to stop asset liquidation, participation in CDARS soon

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A total of $105 million in the NMI Retirement Fund's assets has already been transferred to the certificate of deposit account registry service, or CDARS program, according to administrator Richard Villagomez yesterday.

He told *Saipan Tribune* that the assets' transfer to CDARS will continue until the board of trustees officially adopts a decision to stop it.

The Fund earlier voted to liquidate all its investment assets and put them in cash accounts to protect them from potential market risks. This was due to the departure of its investment consultant, Wilshire Associates, in the wake of the enactment of the Beneficiaries Derivative Act in September last year. That law, seen as a potential liability that prompted the flight of the Fund's money managers, has since been repealed.

Villagomez said the CDARS program is hitting capacity constraints to accept more money while they roll over existing placements that are maturing. The Fund, he said, may also be shifting to shorter maturities in anticipation of throwing the whole process in reverse.

As of Dec. 27, 2011 the Fund's investment portfolio had a market value of $2576.7 million. The amount continues to drop due to the agency's constant withdrawals to pay for the pensions of members.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed into law last week the repealer of the Beneficiaries Derivative Act. Despite this action, Villagomez said the board has yet to meet to officially decide on what to do with its investments.

"The board has to formally approve to stop the liquidation/transition process and we anticipate this to occur while Wilshire is brought back onboard as investment consultant. In the meantime, we will continue to move but at a more tempered pace and to the extent that the CDARS program is able to accept," Villagomez said.

Saipan Tribune learned that the maximum amount that can be accepted by the CDARS provider—First Financial—varies every week.

In an email to *Saipan Tribune*, Wilshire principal Maggie Ralbovsky said their legal department is still reviewing the newly enacted repealer law but confirmed that the company has renewed its business license in the CNMI.

The board of trustees earlier approved the issuance of a request for proposal for an investment consultant and actuary. Villagomez said that the board is expected to formally cancel this announcement very soon as a result of the repealer.

He said the Fund has already received communications from its former consultants and money managers indicating their intent to return and serve the Fund. He did not disclose the names of these companies.

Kobler resident scores lack of water supply since last week

A Koblerville resident expressed disappointment with the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. yesterday over the lack of water supply to their residence since last week.

"Not only me that is suffering but also my neighbors. And I have kids that are going to school in the morning," Eric Agulto Borja told *Saipan Tribune*.

Borja, a former Gaming Commission inspector, said his residence is in an elevated area near the Master Auto Shop. He said he could understand if there's no water supply for a day or two but not a week.

Saipan Tribune asked CUC for comments but CUC executive director Abe Malae had yet to respond as of press time yesterday.

Borja said the water supply stopped last Thursday or Friday, but CUC would turn the water supply back on in the evening.

"But now, there's nothing at all," he said.

Borja said he called CUC's Trouble Desk yesterday but only ended up with an argument over the phone with a staff he described as unprofessional.

Borja said he learned that CUC has been fixing water pumps and this has affected their area.

"I'm paying my bills on time. If I don't pay, they will disconnect me," he said.

Borja urged CUC to correct the problem and stop "making the people suffer."

"It's already 2012 we're expecting everything to be good. I don't think we're getting better, we're getting worse," he added. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

BIODIVERSITY TEAM ALIVERETI NAIKATINI, USP-IAS

Marika Tuiwawa, center, stands with the biodiversity assessment team overlooking Matasawalevu Bay of Nakasaleka District of Kadavu, Fiji. The team has discovered a new flowering plant belonging to the *Medinilla* plant group in the highlands of Matasawalevu village. There are around 193 known species of *Medinilla*, occurring in Madagascar, Africa, South Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Of the 193 species, 11 can only be found in Fiji. One of them is the Tagimoucia flower, *Medinilla waterhousei*, the floral emblem of Fiji.

Man arrested for allegedly firing gun

A man was arrested over the weekend for allegedly firing a gun during an argument with his girlfriend at his residence in Dandan.

Juan Roberto was taken to the Superior Court yesterday on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, illegal possession of a firearm, and disturbing the peace.

Associate judge Kenneth L. Govendo imposed a $10,000 cash bail on Roberto, who appeared with counsel, Rosemond Santos.

Govendo found Roberto's warrantless arrest to be justified after a detective took the witness stand and narrated the circumstances of the defendant's arrest.

Roberto allegedly fired an unregistered .22 caliber rifle. The girlfriend was not hit.

A neighbor informed responding police officers on Saturday morning that they heard two gunshots at Roberto's residence.

Saipan Tribune learned that police officers seized at the scene a .22 caliber rifle, three empty shells of .22 caliber bullets, other unexpended .22 caliber bullets, 9mm caliber ammo, and drug paraphernalia.

Officers also allegedly found about 20 marijuana sprouts behind Roberto's home. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Coastal Resources Management
Caller Box 10007, Springs Plaza, Middle Road, Saipan, MP 96950
Website: www.crm.gov.mp
Tel. (670) 664-8300 • Fax (670) 664-8315

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
January 24 , 2012

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CRM OFFICES:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Galaide Development	11/01/2011 SMS-2011-X-063	Galaide Estate Villas	Chalan Galaide, Navy Hill	Major Siting	Approved (12/15/2011)*
2. Saipan Crew Boats Inc.	12/20/2011 SPIm-2011-X-069	Dry Dock	South Sea Plane Ramp	Ports & Industrial APC	Approved (12/20/2011)*
3. YTS Micronesia, Inc.	12/21/2011 SLRm-2011-X-070	Photographic Activities	Managaha Island	Lagoon & Reef APC	Approved (12/21/2011)*
4. My Care Co.	01/03/2012 SSm-2012-X-001	Photographic Activities	Shoreline Area	Shoreline APC	Under Review
5. CUC	01/15/2012 SPIm-2012-X-002	Rehabilitation of Lift Station (S-3)	Lower Base	Ports & Industrial APC	Under Review

Publication of the above list is in accordance with CRM Regulations, which require all permit applications to be published in a local newspaper within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the CRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the CRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APC's) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local CRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a CRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the CRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the CRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the CRM Regulations.

BRUCE L. MAILMAN, #F0153
MAILMAN & KARA, LLC
PMB 238 PPP, Box 10,000
Saipan, MP 96950-8900
Telephone: 233-0081
Facsimile: 233-0090

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC. Plaintiff, -v- **CARMEN D. TUDELA, and PATRICIO F. TUDELA** Defendant.] **CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0151** **NOTICE OF SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court on December 20, 2011, in this matter, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth herein below, all of the right, title, and interest of defendants Carmen D. Tudela and Patricio F. Tudela in and to the following real property located at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands:

LOT 010 K 305, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 010 K 01, the original of which was recorded on August 19, 1987, as Document No. 87-2910 at the office of the Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on February 7, 2011, at the hour of 4:00 p.m., at the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Inspection of Property. It is the responsibility of each bidder to inspect the property prior to the sale. Failure to inspect the property or any portion thereof will not constitute ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer.

Warranties and Covenants. All property listed for sale in this Notice will be sold in its current condition, and at its current location. The sale will be held without any warranties or covenants whatsoever, whether express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of title, merchantability, and/or fitness for any purpose whatsoever, all of which warranties and covenants are hereby expressly disclaimed. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff may give any warranty or covenant, express or implied, with respect to the property listed for sale in this Notice. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff shall be liable for the quality of the property listed for sale in this Notice, or for any fault or defect in the description thereof. Buyers shall not be entitled to rescission, damages, or any other remedy on account thereof.

Conduct of Sale.
a. Reserve. The auction sale may be held with reserve. The reserve price on any property offered for sale may or may not be disclosed to bidders, in the sole discretion of the undersigned.
b. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the laws, customs, and usages of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this Notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any or all bids, for any reason.
c. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this Notice. The highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Advance bids may be submitted only in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The bidder assumes all risk of non-delivery, late delivery, or mis-delivery of bids. Any person, including the plaintiff, may bid in person at the auction sale, whether or not such person has submitted an advance bid.
d. Disputes. The undersigned may resubmit any property listed in this Notice if a dispute arises as to any bid thereon.

Enforcement of Auction Sale.
a. Deposit. Every successful bidder shall pay to the undersigned a deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price immediately after the sale is consummated. Payment shall be in cash or by certified check. The balance must be paid to the plaintiff, in care of Mailman & Kara, LLC, within three (3) days from the date of sale, in cash or by certified check. If the balance is not so paid, plaintiff will retain the deposit as liquidated damages, and will again offer the property for sale.
b. Memorandum of Sale. If requested by the undersigned, every successful bidder must sign a Memorandum of Sale, immediately after the sale of any property is struck off at auction.
c. Court Approval. Every sale may be subject to approval by the Court. The auctioneer makes no warranties or promises with respect to court approval of the sale, including but not limited to the time in which such approval may be granted. No delay in the granting of court approval shall be ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any successful bidder. The successful bidder will be promptly notified if and when court approval is sought, and if and when it is granted.

Change of Terms and Conditions. The undersigned and the plaintiff reserve the right to change any of the terms hereof by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on all bidders by constructive notice.

DATED, this 10th day of January, 2012.

/s/ RONNIE D. HODGES, Auctioneer

Manglona recuses self from Davis' lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has recused herself from handling a lawsuit filed by a U.S. citizen who seeks to stop the Commonwealth Election Commission from denying U.S. citizens who are not of Northern Marianas descent the right to vote on any issue regarding Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution or on any other issues.

In her order issued Friday, Manglona cited 28 USC Section 455(b)(5)(i) in recusing herself from the lawsuit. She did not explain further.

That statute outlines circumstances where disqualification is mandated. The statute provides that the judge shall disqualify himself or herself in the following circumstances: (b) He or his spouse or a person within the third degree of relationship to either of them, or the spouse of such a person (i) is a party to the proceeding, or an officer, director, or trustee of a party.

Manglona

Marianas High School vice principal John H. Davis Jr. had named Senate President Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) as among the co-defendants in his lawsuit. The senator is a brother of Judge Ramona Manglona's husband, acting chief justice John A. Manglona.

Judge Ramona Manglona directed the district court's clerk to refer the case immediately to Chief Judge Alex Kozinski of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit for reassignment to another judge.

Besides Senate President Manglona, the other co-defendants in the case are Commonwealth Election Commission chair Frances M. Sablan, CEC executive director Robert A. Guerrero, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and House Speaker Eliceo D. Cabrera (R-Saipan).

In his lawsuit, Davis, through counsel Jeanne H. Rayphand, asked the district court to declare that Article 18 Section 5(c) of the CNMI Constitution violates the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and is invalid, null, and void.

Article 12 limits landownership in the CNMI only to those of Northern Marianas descent. It is up for voters' review later this year.

Article 18 Section 5(c) states that "in the case of a proposed amendment to Article 12, the word 'voters' shall be limited to eligible voters under Article 7 who are also persons of Northern Marianas descent as described in Article 12 Section 4, and the term 'votes cast' as used in subsection 5(b) shall mean the votes cast by such voters."

Davis wants the court to bar the defendants from denying him and other U.S. citizens who are not NMI descent the right to vote.

Rayphand stated in the complaint that the Legislature, in enacting P.L. 17-40, established a race-based registry "for the purpose of disenfranchising U.S. citizens who are not of Chamorro or Carolinian descent."

BASIC TRAINING CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Airman Derek John R. Hofschneider, left, recently completed basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. At right is his brother, Freddy U. Hofschneider III, who is currently a third year officer school student at the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut, USA.

Man'amko get a visit from Marianas Eye Institute

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas Eye Institute held for the first time yesterday a free vision checkup for the *man'amko* at the Aging Center.

Marianas Eye Institute's Dr. Edward Godnig conducted the screening with technician Vanessa Kisa, certified ophthalmic medical assistant Emily Taitano, and Taitano's daughter, Rita, who volunteered as she aspires to pursue a career in the same field.

Kisa and Taitano checked the *man'amko*'s blood pressure and blood sugar levels first before they were examined by Godnig.

Marianas Eye Institute staffers will continue with the free vision screening at the center today.

Taitano said in an interview that their outreach for the island's elderly is part of the community service of Marianas Eye Institute, which has also been going to public schools since the opening of classes to provide free eye checkup to students.

"It's a good feeling knowing that we are able to reach out to the *man'amko*," Taitano told *Saipan Tribune*. "I know there's a lot of them who need to get their eyes checked but are not able to because of lack of transportation and other problems so we're happy to provide this service to them."

CLARISSA V. DAVID
A Marianas Eye Institute staffer smiles as clients at the Aging Center wait for their turn for blood sugar and blood pressure screenings before getting their vision checked yesterday.

Client Maxi Mereb said she needs to get her vision checked to know if she is using the right reading glasses. "I'm happy that they're here to help the *man'amko*," said Mereb, who is a patient of Marianas Eye Institute's Dr. David Khorram.

Alejandra Blas said she needs to see a doctor because she wants to change her eyeglasses, which she has been using for over five years. "Maybe I cannot see well with these glasses. Thank you Marianas Eye for coming here to help the *man'amko*."

At 82, Pedro Dela Cruz said he still drives at night without eyeglasses but believes he has to get his eyes checked. "With the Marianas Eye visit, I don't have to go to their clinic to see if there's anything wrong with my eyes."

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council chair Teresita Sorroza expressed "a big thank you" to the Marianas Eye Institute. "Eyes are very precious so the community service provided by Marianas Institute allowed those *man'amko* who can't go to their clinic to have their eyes checked here," she added.

Emergency regulation for EAP scholars proposed

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Scholarship Advisory Board has filed an emergency regulation that proposes some changes in the policy governing its Educational Assistance Program. If approved, the changes will take effect in the fall 2012 semester.

Among the proposed changes is requiring a higher grade point average—from the current 2.25 to 2.75—and giving the Northern Marianas College the authority to determine the award amount for eligible EAP scholars, according to Scholarship administrator Jackie Che yesterday.

Under existing regulations, the administrator makes the decision on who will be eligible to get the scholarship and the amount that will be awarded. If the proposed emergency policy is passed, Che's office will be left with the authority to determine who will receive scholarship assistance.

Also included in the proposed emergency policy is the implementation of an early admission program that will be open to high school students who want to avail of the scholarship at NMC.

Che emphasized, however, that NMC will be authorized to determine the award amount for its EAP scholars only in the fall 2011 and spring 2012 terms. After that, the Scholarship Advisory Board will have to decide whether to retain this authority or turn it over completely to NMC.

For off-island EAP recipients, Che said the decision on who will benefit and how much they will get will still be under her office. She said further discussion on the matter is scheduled in an upcoming board meeting.

The board cited the limited funding available for the EAP program as the main reason for the emergency proposal.

"Because of these budgetary restrictions, the scholarship advisory board seeks to implement changes in its scholarship eligibility requirements so as to best allocate its limited resources. By limiting EAP assistance to those who attend NMC for their first two years of post-secondary education, the SAB seeks to provide students access to core courses and certain degrees at lower tuition rates than many off-island schools," states the proposed emergency regulation now published in the Commonwealth Register.

Beneficiaries of the NMI Scholarship Office suffered a cut in their financial assistance starting fall semester of 2011 after the board enforced a 42-percent cut in their EAP award. From the previous years' $1,200 in EAP grants, the amount was slashed to $700 per student per semester.

Military to conduct training at WA517, FDM

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on Jan. 24-25 from 8am to 5pm.

The U.S. Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on Jan. 26 from 3pm to midnight.

The general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. W-517 supports surface and aerial gunnery, missiles, and laser exercises. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. ***(PR)***

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Five arson fires in a week

Crime Stoppers is seeking the community's assistance for information on several structure fires that occurred within the past week.

On Thursday, Jan. 12, there were two fires. The first fire, reported at 9:40pm, was at the abandoned MGM Garment factory (a four-story concrete building), San Antonio. While DPS firefighters were suppressing that fire, another fire was reported at 11pm, on two empty single-story structures behind the Monte Carlo Club in Chalan Piao. All structures involved were damaged and destroyed by the fire.

On Saturday morning, Jan. 14, at about 1am, DPS Fire personnel responded to an abandoned one-story tin house structure fire by the Toha Supermarket in San Antonio. At approximately 2:45am, another fire was reported near Sugar Dock, Susupe. A two-story abandoned house was on fire. At about 5:30am, Fire personnel responded to a third structure fire that morning. It was an unoccupied single dwelling building located behind Car Quest, Chalan Kanoa.

All structure fires are on abandoned or unoccupied buildings. Fire investigators suspect arson in these fires pending further investigation.

DPS and Crime Stoppers are seeking help from the public. Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.com. Crime Stoppers pays up to $1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

Senate follows up on plan to let students borrow vs scholarship checks

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate is following up on its proposal to the CNMI Scholarship Office to allow eligible students to borrow against their scholarship awards to ensure that scholars will be able to pay their tuition on time, more than half a year since senators first brought up the idea with Finance and scholarship officials.

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) wrote a follow-up letter on Friday morning to CNMI Scholarship Office Jacqueline P. Che on the matter but as of yesterday, Hofschneider said his office has yet to receive a response.

In his one-page letter, Hofschneider said despite the current economic situation, it is important for the CNMI to continue to support students pursuing postsecondary education.

"However, CNMI Scholarship awards have been plagued with delays and are often released long after student payments are due," the senator told Che.

Hofschneider said in order to resolve this issue, the Senate began discussions with the Marianas Public Land Trust in the summer of 2011 to ensure the timely release of scholarship awards by fronting the necessary funds for scholarship awards.

"The current administration, along with your office and the Department of Finance, then took over these discussions and opened them up to any interested banks. Unfortunately, the Senate has yet to hear any updates on this issue and already, students are entering a new college semester without their awards from the previous one," Hofschneider said.

He pointed out that the delay in the release of scholarship checks is detrimental to all students who have been calling and requesting for support.

"Therefore, there is an immediate need to resolve this issue by forming a relationship with either MPLT or any interested bank," the senator added.

The government has been delayed in releasing scholarship checks because of cash flow issues.

Firs ever Island Artist Exhibit unveiled at Grand Hotel lobby

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Over 100 artworks of 19 artists are featured at the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture's first Island Artist Exhibit, which opened at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby on Friday.

These artists are Martin Castro, Jr., Priscilla J.P., Leslie Ware, Catherine Perry, Vicente Duenas, Chen Xiao Ping, Raphaela Rubwan, Joe Weaver, Cherry Camigla, Michael Finey, Frank Secharmidal, Sandy Weaver, Joe Kani, Debra Winkfield, Ernie David, Jennifer Kogure, Nick Klewei, Gregorio Villegas Bacnis, and Mark Robertson.

The exhibit, which is open to the public for free until Feb. 29, will also be featuring during weekends live art demonstrations such as painting, weaving, and carving, said Arts Council visual and traditional coordinator Darrell Moteisou.

Moteisou said more artists are expected to display their artworks—paintings, photographs, ornaments, accessories, and wood carvings, among others—in the coming days.

"There's definitely more interest coming from our artists, some of whom have just recently become registered with the Arts Council," Moteisou told *Saipan Tribune*.

Moteisou said the open venue for the exhibit appealed to the artists. "They like the hotel lobby because it can attract more tourists who can buy their creations as a personal souvenir or gifts for loved ones back home."

He noted that the artworks are safeguarded by the hotel's security personnel and cameras as well as other staff.

Priscilla J.P., who makes ornaments from recycled products such as coconut husks, shells, and seeds, said that it is generous of the Saipan Grand Hotel management to host the exhibit for them.

"We're glad that they helped us promote our art especially in these trying times when it's more difficult for local artists to earn a living," she said. "I just hope that we'll get more support from the rest of the community."

Moteisou urged the public to support local artists by visiting the Island Artist Exhibit. "We invite you to check out their works and see if there's anything they would want to buy."

For more information, visit the Arts Council next to the post office on Capital Hill or call 322-9982 or 83.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Priscilla J.P. applies the finishing touches on her artwork displayed at the first Island Artist Exhibit, which opened at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby last Friday.

BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

NOTICE OF SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission will conduct a special business meeting at 10:00 a.m. on January 27, 2012 at Retirement Fund Building Conference Room, Capitol Hill to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome. Reports and other documents relevant to the agenda will be available at the meeting for public inspection. Questions regarding the agenda should be referred to Mr. Robert Torres, Esq., who serves as counsel to the Commission's regulatory consultant, at 670-234-5750.

AGENDA

- **Administrative matters:**
  - Call to order – approval of agenda
  - Quorum and authority to act.
  - Approval of minutes of November 19, 2011 meeting as continued on November 29, 2011.
- **Public comments.**
- **CUC Electric Division [Docket 09-1].**
  - $10 million dollar Independence Bank loan.
  - Electric base rate increase.
  - Establishment of new municipal pumping customer class.
  - Public comment period for proposed net metering tariff.
  - Deadline extension for CUC compliance with renewable portfolio standards.
  - Establishment of new public street and private area lighting tariff.
  - Procurement matters:
  - Recurring goods and services procurement Protocol amendment.
  - Recurring inventory procurement Protocol amendment, with FY12 ceilings.
  - Review threshold Protocol amendment.
  - Security services contract.
  - Government receivables – proposed memoranda of understandings with CNMI Government and Public School System.
  - Plan to reduce back office unaccounted for energy and technical losses.
  - LEAC tariff amendment.
  - LEAC reconciliation – August 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.
  - Establishment of new LEAC rate.
- **CUC Water and Wastewater Divisions [Docket 12-01].**
  - Wastewater base rate increase. Water base rate reduction.
  - Establishment of new water and wastewater energy charges.
  - Establishment of new service charge for verification of back flow devices.
  - Petition to establish a new agricultural water rate.
- **Other business.**

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-12-006

PIPELINE PROJECT MNAGEMENT, DESIGN SERVICES & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE
(Emergency Procurement)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced firms to provide Project management to include Design & Construction Management services for CUC's 8-Inch Diesel Fuel Pipeline Replacement Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Contractor shall furnish labor for the Design and Project Management Services for the Commonwealth Utilities Commission (CUC) from award to completion of the 8" diesel pipeline project, tasks shall include but not be limited to weekly, monthly inspection reports, design completion, construction and quality assurance oversight, site visits and coordination with the CUC, construction contractor and regulatory agencies.

The project involves replacement of an existing 8 inch aboveground petroleum pipeline (approx. 1 mile long) with an 8 inch underground pipeline from the Saipan seaport at the Mobil Oil Bulk Plant to the CUC Power Plant 1 and 2. The underground pipe installation portion of the project includes archeological monitoring, excavation/trenching, shoring, placement of bedding, welding and testing of pipe segments, pressure relief valves, high and low point drains, valve pits, pipe jacket, bridge crossing, pipe pigging, cathodic protection, based on 49 CFR part 195 and other applicable codes.

This project is being performed under a stipulated order (SO) being overseen by the U.S. EPA and Federal Judge. The project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), Office of the Insular Affairs.

The Scope-of-Work will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested Offerors, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays.

The response to this RFP must be received with the title **"PIPELINE PROJECT MNAGEMENT, DESIGN SERVICES & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE 8-INCH DIESEL FUEL PIPELINE"** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Ms. Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org no later than **January 27, 2012 at 10:00 AM**, (ChST) local time. Late submissions will not be considered.

All inquiries must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (CHST) local time on **January 25, 2012** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr. Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org; Technical Manager for Oil via email ed.char@cucgov.org; Managing Engineer, Power generation, via email venugopal.prabhakara@cucgov.org and Ms. Janina Muna, Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org. CUC will respond to any questions and clarifications only to prospective Offerors who have registered with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division for the solicitation.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. Contract will be awarded to the most responsive proposers, as adjudged by the Source Selection Committee (SSC). CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the Request for Proposal in the interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

Bank seeks graduating seniors for scholarship

»40th anniversary celebrated, paid summer internships included

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam has been awarded $5,000 in grants from the Access Exchange group, which consist of Fiserv network members. In celebration of its 40th anniversary, Bank of Guam will match the award so that a total of $10,000 in scholarships will be awarded by June 2012. Each scholarship will be for $2,000 awarded to five recipients, all graduating high school seniors. The five recipients will also be eligible for a summer and/or winter paid internship with Bank of Guam.

To be eligible for the program, applicants must:

Be U.S. citizens who are residents of the Micronesian region;

Be high school seniors who are graduating in 2012 from an accredited high school with a 3.5 grade point average (copies of transcripts and SAT/ACT scores required);

Submit an original, numbered application due March 15, 2012 to Bank of Guam;

Submit three letters of recommendation, one from a non-academic source;

Submit answers to four essay questions.

The scholarship will be available for use at any U.S. accredited college or university, and would be earmarked to those students pursuing degrees in business, finance, accounting, economics or related majors (can be multi-disciplinary). Ten semifinalists will be selected by April 30 and will then be required to submit additional documents, including an acceptance letter to an accredited four-year college.

Lou A. Leon Guerrero, Bank of Guam board chair, president, and chief executive officer, stated, "In celebration of our 40 years of serving our communities, we are delighted to offer graduating high school seniors an opportunity to continue their education at an accredited college or university. Given Bank of Guam's longstanding service to higher education for its communities, we are proud to continue this commitment."

Applications are available at all Bank of Guam branches and the Customer Service Department in Hagatña Branch Lobby. They have also been distributed to Guam's high schools. Only originals will be accepted. ***(PR)***

Coast Guard hosts weekend for Sea Cadets

APRA HARBOR, Guam—U.S. Naval Sea Cadets from the Marianas Division had the opportunity to be Coast Guardsmen for the weekend, learning about environmental stewardship and other Coast Guard missions.

The Sea Partners Campaign is a Coast Guard environmental education and outreach program focused on communities at large to develop community awareness of maritime pollution issues and to improve compliance with marine environmental protection laws and regulations.

"On the first day Sea Cadets learned about the effects of oil, hazardous chemicals, waste and debris on the marine environment" said Marine Science Technician 3rd Class Sarah Jacobs. "We also talked about ways groups and individuals can take action to protect the waterways around Guam."

"After learning about environmental cleanups, taking action was exactly what we did," she said.

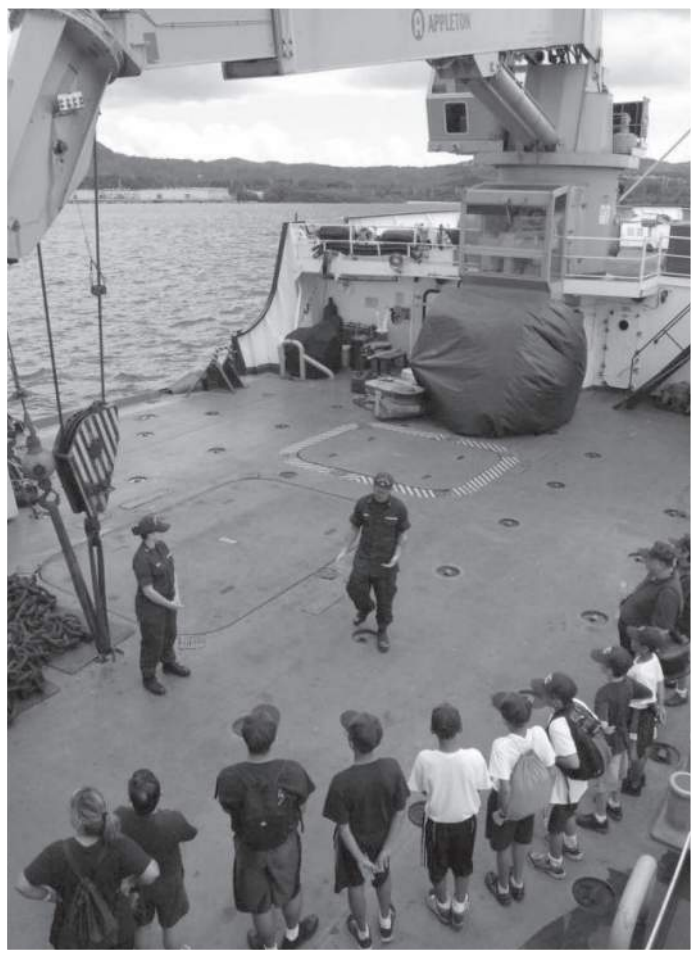
The following day, Coast Guard members and Sea Cadets partnered to conduct a beach cleanup around the shores of Merizo pier. Together the group filled over 15 bags of trash and separated materials that could be recycled.

Throughout the weekend, Sea Cadets toured Station Apra Harbor, experiencing small boat station life. Cadets also climbed aboard Coast Guard Cutter Assateague and Sequoia to learn about each cutter's unique and shared missions. All Coast Guard units on Guam share the responsibility of protecting the environment amongst a myriad of other missions including search and rescue and maritime security.

Since 1958, the Naval Sea Cadet Corps mission has been committed to providing American youth with a drug and alcohol free environment to foster their leadership abilities, broaden their horizons through hands-on training and guide them to becoming mature young adults.

For more information on the Sea Partners Campaign visit: http://homeport.uscg.mil/sea-partners. ***(PR)***

JENNIFER RUSSELL
MERIZO, Guam—The Coast Guard partnered with Sea Cadets to clean up the environment in Guam's communities. Together they filled 15 bags total of trash and recyclables picked up from around the shore of Merizo Pier.



U.S. COAST GUARD/LT. JUNIOR GRADE RICHARD RUSSELL
APRA HARBOR, Guam – Sea Cadets stand on the buoy deck of Coast Guard Cutter Sequoia as Boatswains Mate 3rd Class Jared Barnes discusses the cutter's Aids to Navigation Mission.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Half-days, PTSA meeting at Kagman High

Kagman High School students are scheduled for half days on Wednesday, Jan. 25, and Thursday, Jan. 26, 2012. Dismissal time will be at 1pm. The purpose is to help students focus on the final exams assigned those days. This will also allow time for teachers to get grading and grade inputting done.

There will be a PTSA meeting this Thursday, Jan. 26, at 5:30pm in the school's cafeteria.

For more information, call the KHS main office at 237-3840 or e-mail: kagmanhs@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Deadline extended for Tinian scholarships

The Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board is informing applicants--new, continuing, and returning--that the submission deadline has been extended until Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012. Continuing applicants submission requirements are an original transcript, class schedule, and memorandum of agreement. All new applicants that have yet to submit their requirement deficiencies are requested to comply on or before Jan. 31, 2012. For more information, contact the Tinian Municipal Scholarship office at (670)433-1800, 433-1802, or email tinianscholarship@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

First aid/CPR/AED training dates

■ Adult CPR/AED, Jan. 24, Tuesday, 6pm-9pm

■ First Aid: Jan. 25, Wednesday, 6pm-9pm

Contact the American Red Cross-Northern Mariana Islands Chapter at 234-3459 to register. To learn more, visit www.redcross.org/training. ***(ARC)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 24, 2001

Arroyo outlines core program of government

Invoking *salus populi suprema lex*, the Supreme Court of the Philippines, in an en banc decision, took judicial notice of the vacancy in the position of the Philippine President. Based on this, Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was sworn into office by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court at 12:30 in the afternoon of Jan. 20, 2001. Expressions of support from various business sectors, civil society, political leaders, and the general public reflect the wide acceptance of the new president's decision to lead the country toward reforms.

NMC recovers $.5M in payment dues

The implementation of stern collection policies at the Northern Marianas College is beginning to gain ground, according to the NMC Business Office, noting a remarkable improvement in students' tuition payment habits. Since the Board of Regents last year instigated moves to employ stricter collection efforts, the college has recouped roughly around $585,000 of outstanding student dues since Sept. 2000, out of the long overdue $2.8 million worth of tuition debts. According to the Business Office, some $2.184 in receivables still need to be recovered.

Jan. 24, 2003

OPA faults CUC's hirings, promotions

Almost 18 percent of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation's over 300 personnel are receiving on-call pay, a practice that is based on its unregistered and incomplete Personnel Manual that does not adequately address different compensation processes, the Office of the Public Auditor said in a report. The same report also revealed that six of 22 CUC promotions were question-able, adding that 23 of 46 exceptional employee evaluation reports given in 2000 and 2001 were not supported by written justifications. Since the CUC's manual does not address promotions, it frequently promotes people without adequate justification, said Public Auditor Michael Sablan.

More austerity plans mulled

The Senate is hoping to gain the lower House's concurrence on the proposal to cut 10 percent of each Legislature member's $155,000 constitutional allotment, as part of efforts to contribute to the government's cost-savings goals. Senate Floor Leader Joaquin G. Adriano said an ad hoc committee composed of selected members from both Houses may be formed to jointly review several cost-cutting recommendations. "We will deliver a letter to the Speaker, asking him to nominate maybe three members to join us and incorporate all the recommendations for the Legislative branch to assist the government in terms of reducing expenses," said Adriano.

Jan. 24, 2004

SGMA tackles environmental concerns

The Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association has taken the initiative to meet with the CNMI's environmental agencies to address environmental concerns. The Coastal Resources Management Office welcomed this development, arranging a meeting with the SGMA and CRM agencies on Jan. 28. Besides CRMO, CRM agencies include the Division of Environmental Quality; the departments of Public Works, Lands and Natural Resources, and Commerce; Historic Preservation Office; and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. CRMO enforcement chief Martin Cabrera said the agencies have been notified about SGMA's request. The meeting would be held at the CRMO's conference room beginning 9am, he said.

PSS faces dilemma on USDE grants

The Public School System has not seen eye to eye with the U.S. Department of Education on the use of a multi-million-dollar grant money under the No Child Left Behind law. Education commissioner Rita H. Inos said during yesterday's board meeting that up to now, the PSS has not received its funding from USDE for fiscal year 2004. The PSS expects to receive some $10 million from USDE for the current year. Inos said her office has already sent three letters to USDE asking it to allow the PSS to spend its grant money, particularly Title 6 and 5, with some flexibility but the department has not made any clear decision yet.

Island Snapshots

NEW CHAMBER OFFICERS
Superior Court judge David Wiseman, left, swears in the 2012 Saipan Chamber of Commerce board of directors led by re-elected president Douglas Brennan of Microl Corp., fifth from right, during the installation dinner at Fiesta Resort & Spa on Saturday.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Colorful lions dance at the Hyatt Regency Saipan lobby yesterday to mark the first day of the Year of the Dragon.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

KUNG HEI FAT CHOI
Dancers from the Chinese Association of Saipan wait for the start of the lion dance at the Hyatt Regency Saipan lobby yesterday.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Lion dancers delight the crowd.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

FOOD TASTING
Shoppers take a slice of the Bacon & Tomato Pizza that was prepared using Kikkoman Teriyaki Baste & Glaze with Honey & Pineapple during the tasting event a the Joeten Shopping Center in Susupe.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

From left to right, sisters Rose, Anna, and Carol Chan prepare the hong bao for the lion dancers at the Canton Restaurant in Garapan yesterday noon.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa holds a Chinese calligraphy as Rose Chan of the Chinese Association of Saipan claps during the lion dance performance at the hotel lobby yesterday.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

A young girl waits for her serving of Sweet & Sour Pork, which used Kikkoman Teriyaki Marinade and Sweet & Sour sauces.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Empowering women, one word at a time

By JALIL MOHAMMADI
THE INSTITUTE FOR WAR & PEACE REPORTING

HERAT, Afghanistan—Nazira looked up proudly from a notebook bearing a U.N. logo to show a series of words written in red ink.

Six months ago, Nazira could neither read nor write, but the 27-year-old from Afghanistan's western Herat province is now able to transcribe the names of her two children, her father and husband.

Her literacy skills may still be basic, but she is confident enough to read out a verse from a Persian poem, saying, "Whoever acquires knowledge is qualified and capable."

While opposition to women's education continues in much of Afghanistan, the last decade has seen significant improvements in this western province. There are 660 literacy classes in Herat's villages and districts, 558 of them for women like Nazira, according to Abdul Nasir Maududi, who oversees the courses for the education ministry.

Provincial officials hope the courses will enable women to play a fuller role in society, and discourage domestic violence. Each class typically has 20 to 30 students; Nasima Hussaini, a teacher in Karukh district, has been teaching 21 students for the last year.

"While serving illiterate women in my society, I can also contribute to my family by earning a salary," she said. "I'm hoping that thanks to these courses, changes are already taking place for Afghan women."

Women attending the courses say they find them hugely empowering. The courses were set up by the U.N.'s children's agency, UNICEF. As an incentive to encourage participation, the World Food Program provides each student 25 kilograms of wheat and three liters of cooking oil per month.

Providing families with food is often what makes the difference in allowing women to attend the classes.

"When I take the wheat and cooking oil home to my husband, he's very happy," said Magul, a 40-year-old in Karukh. "Many men might not let their wives attend if it weren't for the food distribution."

Still, there are still plenty of men in Herat who are reluctant to allow their wives to study. Gulsom, 24, of Guzara district, would like to learn to read, but her husband, Mohammad Nabi, won't allow it. He believes women should stay at home and do the housework, and men should not allow their wives to be part of the world outside.

"I'm illiterate and I don't have any problems in life," he said. "What would be the point of my wife learning to read and write?"

Some clerics in Herat echo such beliefs.

According to Maulawi Mohammad Ismail, a religious scholar in Guzara district, "There is no reference in Islam to indicate that education is essential for women."

But Maududi, the education ministry official who also has a degree in Islamic studies, disputes that, saying that when the Quran discusses the importance of knowledge, it does not draw a distinction between men and women.

For Fatema Yusefi, who sits on the women's council in Injil's Ghelwan village, the importance of educating women is clear. "This is a right that Islam has given us," she said. "Education is the right of every human being."

Amid outcry, a larger truth of war is ignored

By MICHAEL SMERCONISH
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Michael Smerconish writes for The Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may contact him via www.smerconish.com.*

I'm not convinced that U.S. Marines actually urinated on Taliban corpses. I sure hope they didn't. Having watched the video many times, I'm still not sure what I'm seeing. At first blush, it looks like servicemen desecrating the dead bodies of battlefield opponents. But I can't be positive. Pardon my coarseness, but I don't see a stream, I don't see a splash, and I don't see any stains.

I do see a handful of servicemen positioned and acting as if they are urinating on dead enemy fighters, but I don't actually see the act. They might be posing. Or the lack of clarity might be due to a poor YouTube transmission. For all that has been written on the subject, no one seems to have made that observation.

Maybe it doesn't matter. The terrorists who are our enemy are devoid of rationality, and they will treat a simulated act as they would the real thing. They are certifiable. They possess a mind-set that flew passenger airliners into commercial buildings and killed 3,000 innocent civilians. They beheaded Pennsylvania businessman Nick Berg in retribution for Abu Ghraib. And assassinated Dutch director Theo van Gogh for producing a film about the way in which women are subjugated in Islamic society.

Which is why our Marines in the video displayed a reprehensible lack of professionalism. Surely they should have known that acting in this manner would provide fodder for future acts of retribution against their brethren. Shame on them, therefore, for putting comrades in harm's way. Moreover, why record it? Bad as it was to conduct (or simulate) the act, it was arguably worse to memorialize it—essentially ensuring that it would be circulated, weaken U.S. standing in the world, and put others at risk.

Everyone, it seems, has a reaction.

While running for president, Rick Perry said: "Obviously, 18-, 19-year-old kids make stupid mistakes all too often. And that's what's occurred here." John McCain offered: "The Marine Corps prides itself that we don't lower ourselves to the level of the enemy. So it makes me sad more than anything else, because ... I can't tell you how wonderful these people (Marines) are. And it hurts their reputation and their image."

They're both right. These were sophomoric acts committed by young men who should have known better, and their poor judgment will lessen U.S. prestige. That there is no excuse is a no-brainer. The more difficult question is: Why?

Sebastian Junger—who, with photographer Tim Hetherington, was responsible for "Restrepo," the Academy Award-nominated documentary about the war in Afghanistan—offered an explanation that makes some sense. He wrote in the Washington Post:

"But of course they have dehumanized the enemy—otherwise they would have to face the enormous guilt and anguish of killing other human beings. Rather than demonstrate a callous disregard for the enemy, this awful incident might reveal something else: a desperate attempt by confused young men to convince themselves that they haven't just committed their first murder—that they have simply shot some coyotes on the back 40.

"It doesn't work, of course, but it gets them through the moment; it gets them through the rest of the patrol."

I sought out Junger to hear more from the man who was an embed in the Korengal Valley and witnessed the pressures of war firsthand. He said society didn't fully appreciate the cost of war on those serving. He sees the bad behavior as a defense mechanism, a way in which they deal with the harshness of what we ask them to do.

"The only way to psychologically deal with that is to convince yourself that you didn't really kill a human being, you killed an animal," he told me.

Junger believes that the offending Marines need to be investigated and punished, but that our ire and accusations are ignoring the larger truth. As a country, we have asked young people to do worse than urinate on a corpse—we've asked them to create that corpse. So we must keep in mind that they are confused as to why shooting a Taliban with a sniper's rifle from 250 meters is justified, but urinating on his dead body is over the line.

"We're asking these guys to kill, and we can't be too judgmental about the aftereffects of killing while we go on ordering it to be done without owning it," Junger told me this week. "If you're going to have young men go to war, you have to be prepared for ugly behavior, and you have to discipline it, but you shouldn't be shocked."

I asked the acclaimed writer and director if he shared my observation that the Marines might have been acting. He said it had not occurred to him, and then added:

"There is a lot of performance in war, a lot of acting out in things. I can imagine that they actually weren't urinating but were doing something symbolic to say they didn't care they had killed these people, which means deep down they did care, and didn't know how to deal with it."

Which is why the victims in the video that has captivated the world are not only the dead men on the ground.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The Descendants

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) previously taught at San Vicente Elementary School on Saipan and is currently a guest lecturer at Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

The movie. A friend and I took my sister and her husband to see the Golden Globe Award-nominated movie at Kapolei, Oahu's second city. The Hawaii-filmed movie has George Clooney playing the role of a laid back de-machismo-sized descendant of a royal Hawaiian/haole marriage, unfamiliar to us who associate the debonair Clooney to *Oceans 11,* but a role not uncommon among Hawaiian percentage descendants, particularly those associated with the humanities, the arts and the Chardonnay-sipping crowd.

Clooney plays the sole trustee of an ocean cove property that would financially benefit a network of diverse cousins.

The Hawaiians. We hanged out in Honolulu's Kalihi neighborhood in the '90s with some "descendants" including representatives of the rainbow ethnic coalition—Chinese-Filipino-Japanese-Portuguese-Hawaiian, et al (before the LGTB crowd appropriated the image).

One of the early successful asbestos class suit lawyers made a bundle and built a helipad, a house atop a hill on one of the islands. Being one of the '90s progressive Christians sympathetic to the Hawaii-for-Hawaiians cause, I joined to protest the cavalier attitude of our new well-to-do who neither submitted an environmental impact statement prior to his construction, nor honored the sanctity of the land he inadvertently desecrated.

A close friend lives in Maui, my Dad briefly pastored a community on the southern tip of the big island, Mom cooked for a juvenile delinquents' halfway house, a sister nurses at Kapiolani Children's Hospital, a brother was professionally assigned to Kauai, Waianae, and Kalihi, another brother works in the state penal system where a lot of Hawaiian blood reside, a nephew attended Obama's Punahou, and I briefly bumped elbows with the powers-that-be while planning workforce development in the City of Honolulu.

I do not feel uncomfortable or uninformed when discoursing on the displaced *Kanes* and *Wahines* of the Pacific realm to their spotted descendants portrayed in Michener's *Hawaii.* Also conversant on the Pacific Islanders' issues in Polynesia and Micronesia, I went to see the movie with heightened expectations on (DE)OCCUPY land issues.

The Victorian-Freudian modern family. The movie did not add a whit to my social studies know-how but it challenged my social psychology on the descendants of Victorian propriety and Freudian guilt. Clooney's movie wife was a woman who ventured into the edge of ecstasy as an expression of her *femme liberte,* while Clooney lackadaisied himself in the legal profession, oblivious to the desires and yearnings of an evidently gregarious wife, a budding teenage daughter, and one just crossing the threshold of puberty.

In a *kamikaze* lifestyle, the wife lies in coma at a hospital after a boating accident. The movie portrays what happens when legal obligations from her will, the doctors sworn duty, and common sense led to unplugging the life support system so that nature takes its course. It turns out that the "good daughter and faithful wife" was carrying on an affair discovered by the teenage daughter, revealing the prevailing family dysfunction.

The soap opera that follows is authentic enough to exceed anything Korean TV dramas have yet to air, and with a wisecracking teenage boyfriend of the elder daughter, our innards were not immune to the movie plot as it unraveled on the silver screen the reality of the challenged *Ohana*.

My family. Like any good movie worth remembering, *The Descendants'* virtue in this January evening is in the manner it evoked existential identification among the audience. My visiting colleague has been a sole trustee of inherited land in the Philippines, and I watched her strategize and maneuver for four decades through real estate issues that involve a bevy of cousins; I wondered what was on her mind.

But I was more aware of my own dysfunctional family, from among my own siblings around a 91-year-old mother of waning alertness ensconced in an elders' apartment in Oahu's Aala refusing public nursing care, to those of my progeny and relations that is multi-extended and diverse, with whom my continuing engagement covers the whole gamut of emotional state, none of which may be characterized as stable!

This is not a movie review so one will have to wait until the movie makes it to Saipan's Hollywood theatre, or it comes to our local DVD rental office. But I know that in my perspective, the question of what descendants claim as part of their memory and anticipation has moved out of cause-conditioned tradition, or chance-determined luck, into the arena of freedom where choice reigns paramount.

Many worry about the legacy they leave behind. As I live the last score of my 86-year journey, my descendants understand that their lives are what they make of it, out of their own virtues and standards, values and expectations, aims and objectives.

When I go, I am expected to sum a zero balance in memory and anticipation. There shall be no wrangling over inheritance. There won't be any. Only, we are now, and will be all, thankful.

America seems poised to take off in 2012

By NICK SCHULZ
AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

WASHINGTON—The U.S. economy has been doing poorly for so long now that it's easy to get dispirited. But there are several reasons to think 2012 might be a good one for American economic performance.

The financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, and the subsequent recession, forced America's private sector to go through a painful reinvention process. American companies had no choice but to make badly needed reforms. These are the kinds of transformations that companies often avoid during good economic times.

The result is an American private sector that is more productive and efficient than it has ever been. This has been a painful process for many American workers and their families who lost jobs or who faced an uncertain future. But the state of American business is strong today, with high profits and healthy balance sheets. This should serve the economy well this year and going forward.

The United States is also experiencing a major energy boom that is driving job creation. No, it's not in trendy energy sectors such as wind and solar, which receive so much press attention.

Instead, major natural gas and shale oil finds are bringing a sense of optimism to parts of the old Rust Belt and the upper Midwest. Rail traffic has been a bright spot in recent months, with American railroads moving more goods.

As University of Michigan (Flint campus) economist Mark J. Perry (and fellow at the American Enterprise Institute) notes, "The materials moving daily around the country by rail are the 'raw ingredients'—coal, grains, chemicals, lumber, minerals, paper, iron, steel, etc.—of American industry that are being delivered to a company, factory or plant somewhere in the U.S. for the next stage of processing. Increases in orders for the inputs delivered by rail in 2011 will translate into increases in final output this year, which could also contribute to greater job growth in 2012."

America is also leading the world in the development of state-of-the-art, fourth-generation wireless networks. These ultrafast communications platforms will likely provide an additional boost to the economy as companies such as Verizon, AT&T and others offer new services in 2012 and beyond. The telecom and Internet sector has been one of the few bright spots of the American economy and its growth is likely to continue. Of course, the problems in Europe are not going away any time soon as the continent wrestles with its sovereign debt crisis. The disintegration of the Euro would be a big shock and could mean a rough patch ahead for America's economy.

But there is another possibility with respect to Europe, however. In some ways, the current troubles there could actually help the United States.

As my American Enterprise Institute colleague John Makin points out in a recent paper, "Although Europe will continue to struggle with its growing sovereign-debt crisis in 2012, the United States may benefit from the perception that its relative position is improving."

Confidence matters greatly to economic success. If global markets increasingly view the United States as the safest place to invest and do business, this will help the American economy.

Where does politics fall into the picture? It is an election year, after all. Gridlock in Washington means major policy shifts are most likely off the table for the year. And the economy could well benefit from the resultant policy stability in Washington.

The election likely will turn on issues related to the domestic economy. We can hope that as the political parties compete for votes, they will be pressured to embrace policies that foster entrepreneurship, innovation and opportunity.

American voters, long frustrated over the last several years' anemic economic performance, can cast votes for growth and a brighter economic future.

Nick Schulz is editor of American.com and a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Letters to the Editor

Hurting NMDs

Last Friday, Jan. 13, there were 12 Notices of Auction and Notice of Sale in one of the local newspapers. Let us set aside the why these 12 properties are on sale. (In these depressed economic times, it is unfortunate that many families are losing their homes and land. What is even more unfortunate is that some of these foreclosures may have been avoidable—if not for restrictions due to Article 12.)

Article 12 is inadvertently hurting the very people that it set out to protect. Why? Because under Article 12, only NMD can hold land fee simple. Let us face the fact that there are only a few NMDs with means to buy land fee simple. This means that those wanting to sell or are forced to sell—like the 12 properties listed on Friday's edition of the local newspaper—are faced with very limited opportunities and limited buyers. In other U.S. states and territories that do not have land alienation restriction laws like Article 12, homeowners have the option of seeking equity loans or the ability to re-finance current loans. Homeowners are not able to avail of these opportunities. Thus, without the ability to loan against the real value of their property, they are forced into foreclosure.

This generates a buyer's market where buyers dictate the value of your property based on what they want for it rather than what the true value of the property is in an open market. By open market we mean the sale is open to all. including non-NMDs, on similar terms.

Another "side effect" of Article 12 is if the sale amount of the property is less than the true value, the land/home owner is still expected to pay for the difference. This constitutes a double hit on the land/home owners as not only is he or she losing his or her property but is expected to still pay the difference in order for the loan to be fully paid.

Is this fair? Can it be avoided? What can we do? The answers are, it is certainly not fair. Yes, it can be avoided and yes, we can do something about it.

I know that if Article 12 is abolished, this particular "ill" will go away as an open market for land buying and selling will develop.

We have an opportunity to do away with Article 12 this year by working together to petition to allow the people of the CNMI to vote whether to retain or repeal (abolish) Article 12. There are some of us who firmly believe Article 12 is needed and good for us. I ask those with this thinking to read the Section by Section Analysis of the Covenant and the CNMI Constitution. You will find immediately that it was not the intent for it to be a permanent item in our Constitution and in fact, it says that after 25 years, we may re-visit the provision and decide what to do with it.

By the way, abolishing or repealing Article 12 does not force anyone to sell his or her land. Private property owners in the CNMI can choose to lease their land for any amount of time they want or to sell it and to decide to whom to sell or lease the land to. Abolishing Article 12 will give complete rights and absolute power to private property owners. This is not the case at this time with Article 12 in effect. In actuality, the government or public is part owner of your private property.

Efrain F. Camacho
Navy Hill, Saipan

You're being duped

In case you don't realize it, "Jack Schmidt" is a false name (it's a common euphemism derived from the vulgar expression "You don't know jack s**t", and there is no such place as Poontang, Indiana. Poontang is a slang reference (derived from Ilocano) to a woman's sexual organs or to the act of sexual intercourse. Please don't publish any more letters from "Jack Schmidt" or anyone else who won't sign their true name.

Michael A. White, Esq.
The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

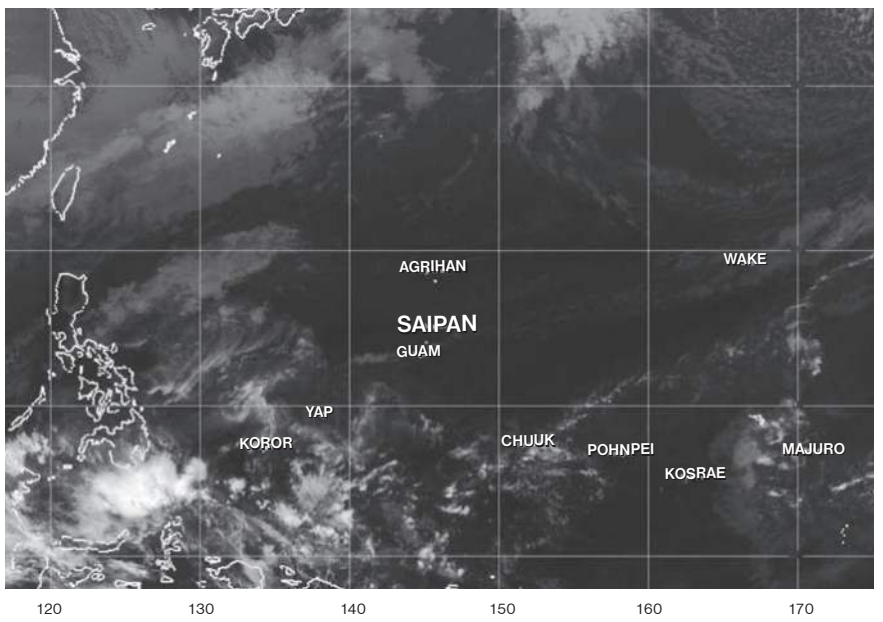
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼76
Palau	Cloudy	▲87	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲87	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲87	▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲71	▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲33	▼ 7
Hong Kong	Showers	▲56	▼51
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼70
London	Rain	▲49	▼36
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲67	▼47
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲86	▼74
Melbourne	Sunny	▲81	▼64
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲79	▼66
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼31
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲44	▼35
Paris	Cloudy	▲47	▼37
Pusan	Sunny	▲36	▼26
Rome	Showers	▲61	▼40
Salem	Rain	▲48	▼48
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲61	▼47
Seoul	Sunny	▲26	▼14
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲45	▼31
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲56	▼36

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 21N180 to southwest of Wake Island at 16N163E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found along and up to 150 miles north of this front east of 175E. Patchy clouds and showers are present west of 175E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Yap and Koror south of a line from 5N130E to 7N141E to 4N148E and southeast of Majuro east of a line from 7N175E to 5N172E to 2N172E. A trade-wind trough near Chuuk is generating scattered showers over Chuuk within 80 miles of a line from 6N150E to 10N157E. Another trough extends northward between Kosrae and Kwajalein from 3N168E to 9N168E. Scattered showers are found over Kwajalein but east of Kosrae within 160 miles of the trough axis.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:20 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
9:08 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
2:49 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
7:50 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:08 AM	7:03 PM
Wednesday	7:51 AM	7:56 PM
Thursday	8:31 AM	8:46 PM
Friday	9:10 AM	9:35 PM
Saturday	9:47 AM	10:22 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

AP ENTERPRISE

Health overhaul lags in states

WASHINGTON (AP)—Here's a reality check for President Barack Obama's health overhaul: Three out of four uninsured Americans live in states that have yet to figure out how to deliver on its promise of affordable medical care.

This is the year that will make or break the health care law. States were supposed to be partners in carrying out the biggest safety net expansion since Medicare and Medicaid, and the White House claims they're making steady progress.

But an analysis by The Associated Press shows that states are moving in fits and starts. Combined with new insurance coverage estimates from the nonpartisan Urban Institute, it reveals a patchwork nation.

Such uneven progress could have real consequences.

If it continues, it will mean disparities and delays from state to state in carrying out an immense expansion of health insurance scheduled in the law for 2014. That could happen even if the Supreme Court upholds Obama's law, called the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

"There will be something there, but if it doesn't mesh with the state's culture and if the state is not really supporting it, that certainly won't help it succeed," said Urban Institute senior researcher Matthew Buettgens.

The 13 states that have adopted a plan are home to only 1 in 4 of the uninsured. An additional 17 states are making headway, but it's not clear all will succeed. The 20 states lagging behind account for the biggest share of the uninsured, 42 percent.

Among the lagging states are four with arguably the most to gain. Texas, Florida, Georgia and Ohio together would add more than 7 million people to the insurance rolls, according to Urban Institute estimates, reducing the annual burden of charity care by $10.7 billion.

"It's not that we want something for free, but we want something we can afford," said Vicki McCuistion of Driftwood, Texas, who works two part-time jobs and is uninsured. With the nation's highest uninsured rate, her state has made little progress.

The Obama administration says McCuistion and others in the same predicament have nothing to fear. "The fact of states moving at different rates does not create disparities for a particular state's uninsured population," said Steve Larsen, director of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight at the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

That's because the law says that if a state isn't ready, the federal government will step in. Larsen insists the government will be ready, but it's not as easy as handing out insurance cards.

Someone has to set up health insurance exchanges, new one-stop supermarkets with online and landline capabilities for those who buy coverage individually.

A secure infrastructure must be created to verify income, legal residency and other personal information, and smooth enrollment in private insurance plans or Medicaid. Many middle-class households will be eligible for tax credits to help pay premiums for private coverage. Separate exchanges must be created for small businesses.

"It's a very heavy lift," said California's health secretary, Diana Dooley, whose state was one of the first to approve a plan. "Coverage is certainly important, but it's not the only part. It is very complex."

California has nearly 7.5 million residents without coverage, more than half of the 12.7 million uninsured in the states with a plan. An estimated 2.9 million Californians would gain coverage, according to the Urban Institute's research, funded by the nonpartisan Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Democrats who wrote the overhaul law had hoped that most states would be willing partners, putting aside partisan differences to build the exchanges and help cover more than 30 million uninsured nationally. It's not turning out that way.

Some states, mainly those led by Democrats, are far along. Others, usually led by Republicans, have done little. Separately, about half the states are suing to overturn the law.

Time is running out for states, which must have their plans ready for a federal approval deadline of Jan. 1, 2013. Those not ready risk triggering the default requirement that Washington run their exchange.

Yet in states where Republican repudiation of the health care law has blocked exchanges, there's little incentive to advance before the Supreme Court rules. A decision is expected this summer, and many state legislatures aren't scheduled to meet past late spring.

The result if the law is upheld could be greater federal sway over health care in the states, the very outcome conservatives say they want to prevent.

"If you give states the opportunity to decide their own destiny, and some choose to ignore it for partisan reasons, they almost make the case against themselves for more federal intervention," said Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb.

A conservative, Nelson was on the winning side of a heated argument among Democrats over who should run exchanges, the feds or the states. Liberals lost their demand for a federal exchange, insulated from state politics.

"It's pretty hard to take care of the states when they don't take care of themselves," said Nelson, who regrets that the concession he fought for has been dismissed by so many states.

The AP's analysis divided states into four broad groups: those that have adopted a plan for exchanges, those that made substantial progress, those where the outlook is unclear, and those with no significant progress. AP statehouse reporters were consulted in cases of conflicting information.

Thirteen states, plus the District of Columbia, have adopted a plan.

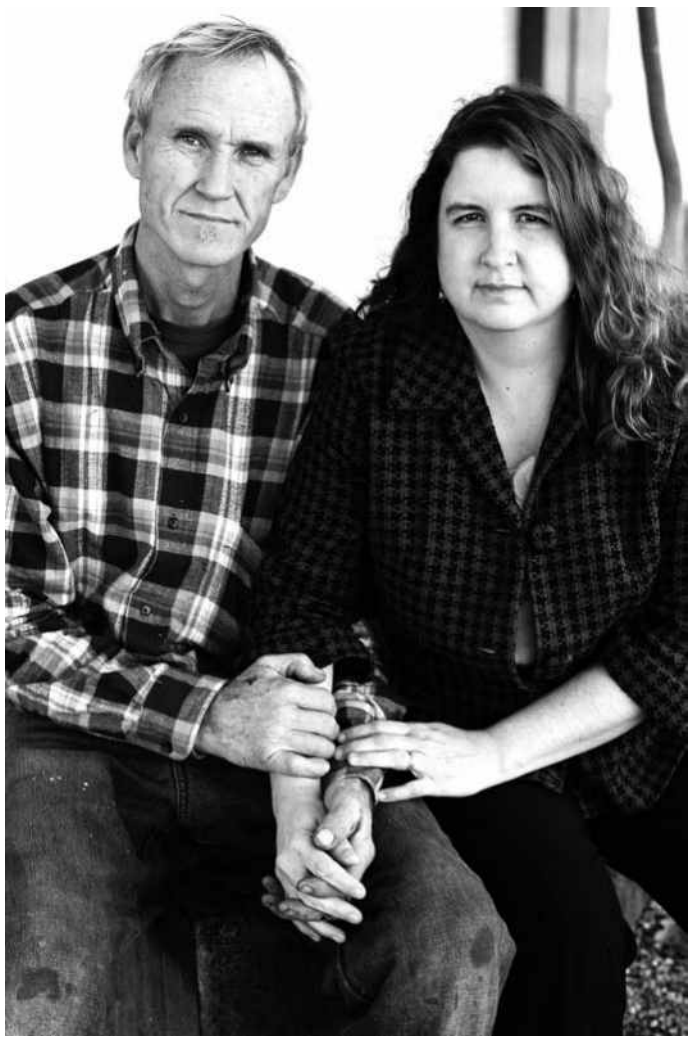
By contrast, in 20 states either the outlook is unclear or there has been no significant progress. Those states include more than 21 million of the 50 million uninsured Americans.

Four have made no significant progress. They are Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana and New Hampshire. The last three returned planning money to the federal government. In Arkansas, Democratic Gov. Mike Beebe ran into immovable GOP opposition in the Legislature. Beebe acknowledges that the federal government will have to run the exchange, but is exploring a fallback option.

In the other 16 states, the outlook is unclear because of failure to advance legislation or paralyzing political disputes that often pit Republicans fervently trying to stop what they deride as "Obamacare" against fellow Republicans who are more pragmatic.

In Kansas, for example, Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger is pushing hard for a state exchange, but Gov. Sam Brownback returned a $31 million federal grant, saying the state would not act before the Supreme Court rules. Both officials are Republicans.

"It's just presidential politics," said Praeger, discussing the situation nationally. "It's less about whether exchanges make sense and more about trying to repeal the whole law." As a result, outlook is unclear for a state with 361,000 uninsured residents.



AP

Dan and Vicki McCuistion, of Driftwood, Texas, together, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012, in Austin, Texas. The McCuistions have been uninsured throughout their 17 years married.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

BlackBerry maker co-CEOs step down

TORONTO (AP)—BlackBerry maker Research in Motion'co-CEOs, Jim Balsillie and Mike Lazaridis, announced Sunday they are stepping down from the once-iconic company that has struggled to compete in recent years. The pair who founded RIM will be replaced by Thorsten Heins, a chief operating officer who joined RIM four years ago from Siemens AG, RIM said. Balsillie and Lazaridis have headed Waterloo, Ontario-based RIM together for the past two decades. "There comes a time in the growth of every successful company when the founders recognize the need to pass the baton to new leadership. Jim and I went to the board and told them that we thought that time was now," Lazaridis said in a statement.

National gas prices up 3.5 cents in past 2 weeks

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—The average U.S. price of a gallon of gasoline has jumped three-and-a-half cents over the past two weeks. That's according to the Lundberg Survey of fuel prices, released Sunday, which puts the price of a gallon of regular at $3.39. Midgrade costs an average of $3.54 a gallon, and premium is at $3.66. Diesel was up about two cents, at $3.91 a gallon. Of the cities surveyed, Salt Lake City, Utah, has the nation's lowest average price for gas at $2.94. Los Angeles has the highest at $3.71.

Chavez: Venezuela to buy Embraer, Airbus jets

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said Sunday that his government plans to buy new Embraer jets from Brazil as well as used Airbus jets to expand his country's state airline Conviasa. Chavez said Venezuela will negotiate credit with the Brazilian Development Bank to buy up to 20 Embraer jets from Brazil. Chavez thanked Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff "for the credit they're going to give us." He said the estimated cost of 20 jets would be $814 million.

FHB posts 3.4 % earnings increase for year

HAGATNA, Guam—First Hawaiian Bank reported net income of $51.5 million for the fourth quarter 2011, a 2.6-percent gain over the comparable period of 2010.

For the year, the bank earned net income of $209.0 million, an increase of 3.4 percent over 2010 excluding a one-time tax benefit. Total deposits reached a record $12.2 billion. The announcement was made yesterday by Bob Harrison, First Hawaiian Bank president and chief executive officer.

"Although the local economy remained sluggish, First Hawaiian finished 2011 with strong deposit growth and excellent asset quality. We continued to invest in the State's economy by making more than $2.9 billion in total loans during the year, once again making us Hawaii's largest lender. The state's economic activity is picking up, particularly in the tourism sector, which bodes well for 2012."

For the 12 months ended Dec. 31, 2011, First Hawaiian Bank achieved the following:

Total Assets: reached a record $15.8 billion, up 4.2 percent.

Total Deposits: were $12.2 billion, an increase of 15.7 percent.

Loans and Leases: up 1.5 percent to $8.4 billion.

Capital (Net Worth): was in excess of $2.7 billion and remained well above Hawaii banks and in the top quartile nationally as a percentage of total assets.

Non-Performing Assets to Total Assets: remained one of the lowest in the nation at 0.21 percent.

Efficiency Ratio: was 43.69 percent making First Hawaiian the most productive bank in Hawaii and one of the most efficient in the nation.

In 2011, the bank achieved several accomplishments and milestones:

First Hawaiian launched 24x7 free FHB Mobile Banking accessible through mobile devices and cell phones.

First Hawaiian's ATM network was expanded to include ATMs in 22 Zippy's restaurants in Hawaii.

First Hawaiian became the first bank to offer personal trust services on Guam with the formation of the FHB Guam Trust Co.

The bank was once again the largest corporate contributor to charity. During the year, First Hawaiian's employees donated $2.5 million to over 400 local non-profits throughout Hawaii, Guam and Saipan, bringing the total to $5.0 million over the past two years.

The bank helped the community raise $1.2 million for the Japanese Red Cross Society for the survivors of the March 11, 2011 Japan Earthquake/Tsunami.

First Hawaiian Bank (www.fhb.com) with $15.8 billion in total assets was founded in 1858 and is Hawaii's oldest and largest bank. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BNP Paribas, a leading global financial services institution. BNP Paribas is one of the highest rated banks in the world with a AA- credit rating from Standard & Poor's. ***(FHB)***

Nation

Rep. Giffords to resign from Congress this week

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rep. Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona announced Sunday she intends to resign from Congress this week to concentrate on recovering from wounds suffered in an assassination attempt a little more than a year ago that shook the country.

"I don't remember much from that horrible day, but I will never forget the trust you placed in me to be your voice," the Democratic lawmaker said on a video posted without prior notice on her Facebook page.

"I'm getting better. Every day my spirit is high," she said. "I have more work to do on my recovery. So to do what's best for Arizona, I will step down this week."

Giffords was shot in the head and grievously wounded last January as she was meeting with constituents outside a supermarket in Tucson, Ariz. Her progress had seemed remarkable, to the point that she was able to walk dramatically into the House chamber last August to cast a vote.

Her shooting prompted an agonizing national debate about super-charged rhetoric in political campaigns, although the man charged in the shooting later turned out to be mentally ill.

In Washington, members of Congress were told to pay more attention to their physical security. Legislation was introduced to ban high-capacity ammunition clips, although it never advanced.

Under state law, Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer must call a special election to fill out the remainder of Giffords' term, which ends at the end of 2012.

President Barack Obama on Sunday called Giffords "the very best of what public service should be."

"Gabby's cheerful presence will be missed in Washington," Obama said. "But she will remain an inspiration to all whose lives she touched—myself included. And I'm confident that we haven't seen the last of this extraordinary American."

AP

This Jan. 8, 2012 file photo shows Rep. Gabrielle Giffords waving at the start of a memorial vigil remembering the victims and survivors one year after the Arizona congresswoman was wounded in a shooting that killed six in Tucson, Ariz.

Vice President Joe Biden said he had spoken with Giffords' husband, astronaut Mark Kelly, and told him "the most important thing is Gabby's recovery."

"I know that Gabby will continue to make significant contributions to her state and country, and I stand with her in whatever endeavor she decides to pursue," Biden said.

House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said he saluted Giffords "for her service and for the courage and perseverance she has shown in the face of tragedy. She will be missed."

In a statement, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California said that "since the tragic events one year ago, Gabby has been an inspiring symbol of determination and courage to millions of Americans."

Democratic officials had held out hope for months that the congresswoman might recover sufficiently to run for re-election or even become a candidate to replace retiring Republican Sen. Jon Kyl.

The shooting on Jan. 8, 2011, left six people dead, a federal judge and a Giffords aide among them. Twelve others were wounded.

A 23-year-old man, Jared Lee Loughner, has pleaded not guilty to 49 charges in the shooting. He has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and is being forcibly medicated at a Missouri prison facility in an effort by authorities to make him mentally ready for trial.

In the months since she was shot, Giffords, 41, has been treated in Houston as well as Arizona as she re-learned how to walk and speak.

She made a dramatic appearance on the House floor Aug. 2, when she unexpectedly walked in to vote for an increase in the debt limit. Lawmakers from both parties cheered her presence, and she was enveloped in hugs.

More recently, she participated in an observance of the anniversary of the shooting in Arizona.

In "Gabby: A Story of Courage and Hope," a book released last year that she wrote with her husband, she spoke of how much she wanted to get better, regain what she lost and return to Congress.

She delivers the last chapter in her own voice, saying in a single page of short sentences and phrases that everything she does reminds her of that horrible day and that she was grateful to survive.

"I will get stronger. I will return," she wrote.

Giffords was shot in the left side of the brain, the part that controls speech and communication.

Kelly commanded the space shuttle Endeavour on its last mission in May. She watched the launch from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

Kelly, who became a NASA astronaut in 1996 and made four trips into space aboard the space shuttle, retired in October.

Experts: Paterno's death won't stop court cases

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Joe Paterno would no doubt have made a dramatic courtroom witness. But legal experts said his death will have little or no effect on the criminal or civil cases to come out of the Penn State child sex-abuse scandal.

"Obviously, you're taking away a great deal of the high-profile nature of this case, because it deals with Joe Paterno's football program," said Jeffrey Lindy, a criminal defense lawyer involved in a clergy-abuse case in Philadelphia. "But with regard to the legal impact of his death, there is none."

Paterno died Sunday at 85, two months after former coaching assistant Jerry Sandusky was charged with molesting boys and two university officials were accused of perjury and failing to report child sex-abuse allegations against Sandusky to police.

The criminal case against the two university officials may even become more streamlined without Paterno in the mix.

Former university vice president Gary Schultz and athletic director Tim Curley are charged with failing to report to police what graduate assistant Mike McQueary said he told them in 2002: that McQueary saw Sandusky sexually assaulting a boy in a locker room shower.

McQueary first told Paterno, who said he reported it to Curley and Schultz the next day. The administrators told the grand jury they were never informed that the allegations were sexual in nature.

With Paterno's death, though, a jury is free to focus not on what Paterno knew or did, but on the defendants' actions.

What McQueary told Paterno "was a distraction, and now that that part of the case is really gone, it will focus much more on his interaction not with Paterno, but with the Penn State officials," said Duquesne University law professor Nicholas P. Cafardi.

McQueary is also the more crucial witness in the case against Sandusky, who is charged with abusing 10 boys, at least two of them on the Penn State campus.

Paterno testified for just seven minutes last January before the grand jury. He gave only vague answers—and was never pressed—when asked what he knew about anyone accusing Sandusky of molesting boys.

"Without getting into any graphic detail, what did Mr. McQueary tell you he had seen and where?" Paterno was asked, according to the grand jury testimony read in court last month.

Romney to release taxes, Gingrich ready for Obama

WASHINGTON (AP)—Newt Gingrich worked to capitalize Sunday on his upset victory in South Carolina's Republican presidential primary, while Mitt Romney moved quickly to cut his losses before the next contest with a promise to release his income tax returns within 48 hours.

Gingrich said in a round of television interviews that his win, both unexpected and unexpectedly large, showed he was the Republican best able to go toe to toe with President Barack Obama in the fall. "I think virtually everybody who looks at the campaign knows I represent the largest amount of change of any candidate, and I think that's why they see me as representing their interest and their concerns, not representing Wall Street or representing the politicians of Washington," he said.

Romney argued that point, but not another, agreeing in a television interview that he had made a mistake by refusing to release his tax returns before the South Carolina vote. "If it was a distraction, we want to get back to the real issues in the campaign—leadership, character and vision for America, how to get jobs in America, and how to rein in the excessive scale of the federal government," he said.

The former Massachusetts governor, who made millions in business, said he will make his 2010 return and an estimate for 2011 available online on Tuesday.

The decision marked a concession, as if one were needed, that Romney had stumbled on his way through South Carolina, a state where he led handsomely in the polls several days before the primary.

Florida votes next, on Jan. 31, a 50-delegate contest in one of the most expensive campaign states in the country, and one that Romney can ill afford to lose.

The former governor was an easy winner in the New Hampshire primary earlier in the month. Before that, he was a close runner-up behind former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum in Iowa caucuses where the vote count was so confused that he was originally announced the victor.

Despite his loss on Saturday, Romney remains the contender with the largest and best-funded organization. "Three states in now, we got 47 more to go," he said, adding he was looking forward to the rest.

For all the political momentum gained in South Carolina, Gingrich made it immediately obvious that he is short on funds. He urged supporters via Tweet Saturday night to donate money, and then announced the name of his campaign website while making a nationally televised victory speech.

With their comments, both Romney and Gingrich indicated the race was a two-way competition, likely to go into the spring if not longer.

Santorum had other ideas.

"We're going to Florida and beyond," he said. As he did in a pair of debates in South Carolina, he criticized both Gingrich—calling him a "very high-risk candidate"—and Romney, whom he called a moderate ill-suited to appeal to conservative voters.

Texas Rep. Ron Paul, the fourth contender, has already said he will skip Florida and focus on Nevada and other caucus states.

Gingrich won South Carolina despite being outspent. But in addition to the prohibitive cost of campaigning in Florida, a long-term shortage of funds can cripple efforts to compete in the fast-paced series of primaries and caucuses ahead.

ACROSS THE NATION

6 hurt during shooting at Calif. teen's party

ANTIOCH, Calif. (AP)—Six people, including five teens, were injured when gunfire erupted at a girl's 16th birthday party in the San Francisco Bay area, authorities said Sunday. Police in Antioch believe three or four male partygoers opened fire Saturday night when two groups began arguing, said police Lt. Scott Willerford. Violence is not common in the neighborhood in Antioch, which is about 38 miles northeast of San Francisco. "Weapons were brandished and numerous shots were fired from multiple guns," Willerford said.

Vessels head home after Alaska fuel delivery

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—A Russian tanker that brought fuel to an iced-in Alaska town is heading back to open water—once it gets through miles of sea ice. Coast Guard spokesman Adam De Rocher says its icebreaker, Healy, and tanker Renda were about 100 miles south of Nome on Sunday. He says they left the town on Alaska's western coast on Friday. The icebreaker led the Renda to Nome by cutting a path through Bering Sea ice, allowing the delivery of 1.3 million gallons of fuel. Nome would have run out by spring after a November storm prevented its last pre-winter fuel delivery.

Purported Bonnie and Clyde guns sells for $210K

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Two guns thought to have been used by bank-robbing fugitives Bonnie and Clyde have snatched $210,000 at an auction in Kansas City, Mo. The Joplin Globe reported an online bidder from the East Coast on Saturday bought the weapons believed to have been seized from the outlaw couple's Joplin hideout in 1933. Sold were a .45-caliber, fully automatic Thompson submachine gun—better known as a Tommy gun—and a 1897 Winchester 12-gauge shotgun. Mayo Auction, of Kansas City, was not given permission to release the name of the buyer.

Asia

AP EXCLUSIVE

US talks to Afghan insurgent group

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Anxious to accelerate peace moves, top-level U.S. officials have held talks with a representative of an insurgent movement led by a former Afghan prime minister who has been branded a terrorist by Washington, a relative of the rebel leader says.

Dr. Ghairat Baheer, a representative and son-in-law of longtime Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (Gul-bu-DEEN HEK-mah-tyar), told The Associated Press this week that he had met separately with David Petraeus, former commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan who is now CIA director, and had face-to-face discussions earlier this month with U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and U.S. Marine Gen. John Allen, currently the top commander in the country.

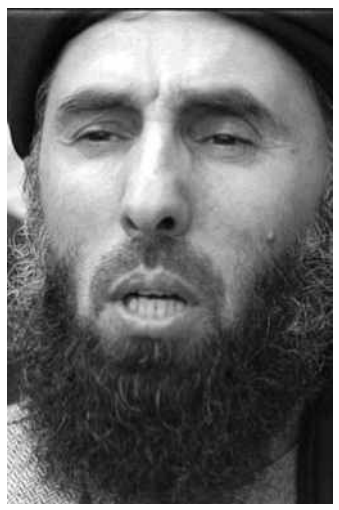
Baheer, who was released in 2008 after six years in U.S. detention at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, described his talks with U.S. officials as nascent and exploratory. Yet, Baheer says the discussions show that the U.S. knows that in addition to getting the blessing of Taliban chief Mullah Mohammad Omar—a bitter rival of Hekmatyar even though both are fighting international troops—any peace deal would have to be supported by Hekmatyar, who has thousands of fighters and followers primarily in the north and east.

Hizb-i-Islami, which means Islamic party, has had ties to al-Qaida but in 2010 floated a 15-point peace plan during informal meetings with the Afghan government in Kabul. At the time, however, U.S. officials refused to see the party's delegation.

"Hizb-i-Islami is a reality that no one can ignore," Baheer said during an interview last week at his spacious home in a posh suburb of Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. "For a while, the United States and the Kabul government tried not to give so much importance to Hizb-i-Islami, but now they have come to the conclusion that they cannot make it without Hizb-i-Islami."

In Washington, National Security Council spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden would not confirm that such meetings took place but said the U.S. was maintaining "a range of contacts in support of an Afghan-led reconciliation process."

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the high-level meetings, said Petraeus last met with Baheer in July 2011 when he was still commanding NATO forces in Afghanistan. Petraeus took over as CIA director in September.



AP

In this Feb. 13, 1996 file photo shows Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Afghan rebel leader and chief of the insurgent group Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, speaking at a news conference in Islamabad, Pakistan.

On Saturday, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said he also had met recently with Hizb-i-Islami representatives. Baheer said he attended those meetings but added that the party considers the Afghan government corrupt and lacking legitimacy.

Karzai's announcement appeared intended to bolster his position as the key player in the search for peace. The U.S. repeatedly has said that formal negotiations must be Afghan-led, but Karzai has complained that his government has not been directly involved in recent preliminary talks with Taliban representatives and plans for setting up a Taliban political office in the Gulf state of Qatar.

Baheer said his meeting with Petraeus, whom he described as a "very humble, polite person," was marked by a few rounds of verbal sparring with each boasting a battlefield strength that the other dismissed as exaggerated.

"There was a psychological war in these first meetings," he said.

Baheer said Crocker and Allen tried to persuade Hizb-i-Islami to become part of Afghanistan's political network, accept the Afghan security forces and embrace the nation's current constitution. He said Hizb-i-Islami was ready to accept the security forces and the constitution, but wants a multiparty commission established to review and revise the charter.

"We are willing to make compromises," said Baheer. "We already have said we will accept the Afghan army and the police."

Flags and flowers on lunar New Year in North Korea

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—Soldiers and children, bundled up against the freezing cold, lined up Monday at Pyongyang's main plaza to pay their respects again to late leader Kim Jong Il on the first day of the lunar new year holiday.

A massive portrait of Kim that had been taken down after a mourning period following his Dec. 17 death was back up at Kim Il Square. People scurried across the vast plaza to get in line to bow and lay single red flowers, the late leader's namesake "kimjongilia" begonias, made of fabric. The song "It's snowing" blared from the loudspeakers, a reminder of Kim's solemn funeral procession through the capital city's snowy streets late last month.

For several weeks after the funeral, Pyongyang was barren and somber. But almost overnight the city has filled with color again. North Korea's red, white and blue national flag fluttered from signposts. Banners celebrating "Juche 101"—the current year, according to the North Korean calendar, which begins with the 1912 birth of national founder Kim Il Sung—and posters marking the holiday were pinned to buildings and walls.

At the plaza in front of the Pyongyang Grand Theater, hundreds of children scampered and shouted as they played traditional Korean games in frigid temperatures. Signs in front of the theater spelled out "We are happy" in big, bold letters.

Pyongyang residents said they were encouraged to celebrate the traditional holiday as they usually do, despite the death of Kim Jong Il, only the second leader North Koreans have known since the nation was founded in 1948. State television aired a segment late Sunday on making rice cake soup, a traditional New Year's meal in both Koreas.

The holiday comes as new leader Kim Jong Un makes a round of visits to military units.

Outside observers have raised questions about whether Kim Jong Un—who's believed to be in his late 20s—is ready to rule a country of 24 million with a nuclear program as well as chronic food shortages.

But the North has dismissed such worries, and state media have put out a stream of reports and images meant to show that Kim has strong military and governing experience. Late last week, for example, North Korea credited Kim Jong Un with spearheading past nuclear testing and said he was "fully equipped" with the qualities of an extraordinary general.

Kim Jong Un, anointed his father's successor at least three years ago, was declared "supreme leader" of the North Korean people, party and military after his father's death. He has pledged to uphold his father's "military first" policy.

AP

President of Maldives Mohammed Nasheed address protesters calling for an independent judiciary in Male, Maldives, Saturday, Jan. 21, 2012.

Maldives asks UN help to resolve 'judicial crisis'

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The Maldives asked the United Nations on Sunday to send a group of international jurists to resolve what it calls a judicial system failure that has resulted in the military's detention of a senior judge.

A government statement said Foreign Minister Ahmed Naseem made the request in a letter to the office of the U.N High Commissioner for Human Rights.

President Mohamed Nasheed's government is under heavy pressure. Street protests have broken out in the capital Male following last week's arrest of Criminal Court Chief Justice Abdulla Mohamed after he ordered the release of a government critic.

Vice President Mohammed Waheed Hassan has also joined calls for the release of the judge, saying that he is ashamed by his government's action.

The government has accused Mohamed of corruption and political bias.

On Sunday, hundreds of protesters gathered in Male to demand the resignation of Nasheed and the release of the judge. Police used tear gas to break up the gathering, but protesters through the capital and demonstrated outside the homes of the president, home minister and police commissioner.

Naseem in his letter explained that the dispute with the criminal court judge was not an isolated incident but "represents a systemic failure of the judicial checks and balances foreseen in the constitution."

"This system failure led directly to the president's decision, as the ultimate guarantor of the constitution and of rule of law in the Maldives, to detain Justice Abdulla Mohamed," the statement said.

The Judicial Service Commission mandated by the constitution to examine the conduct of judges has failed in its responsibilities by not taking action on any of the 143 complaints it received in 2010 alone, the statement said.

Judge Mohamed remains in custody on an island the military uses for training in the Indian Ocean archipelago despite calls for his release by the country's Supreme Court and the prosecutor general. The Maldives human rights commission has also called the arrest unlawful.

Nasheed's critics say that his government is using the military and police to crack down on dissidents and intimidates the media from reporting on the dispute.

Both Nasheed and his deputy Waheed were leading pro-democracy campaigners before being elected to office in the country's first multiparty election in 2008.

Maldives is known for its idyllic resorts for upmarket tourists.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Military: Filipino rebels kill 100 troops in 2011

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Communist guerrillas killed about 100 government troops and police and waged 447 attacks last year despite a continuing decline in their 43-year insurgency, the military said Sunday. The attacks by New People's Army guerrillas included 31 assaults on mining firms, banana plantations and other businesses that damaged $27 million (1.2 billion pesos) worth of equipment and property, military spokesman Col. Arnulfo Burgos said. The rebels earned nearly $7 million (300 million pesos) from extortion in 2011, he said. Although the Marxist insurgency, one of Asia's longest-running, remains the Philippines' leading security threat, rebel attacks have declined in recent years. The number of armed rebel fighters dropped 7.8 percent last year to 4,043, Burgos said.

Plane crashes in New Zealand, killing 2 aboard

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A small plane has crashed in a New Zealand park, killing both people aboard. Authorities say the two-seater Yak aircraft fell into a playing field Monday in the town of Feilding on the country's North Island. Police spokeswoman Kim Perks says the plane left from an airfield a few miles (kilometers) from the crash site and was flying for about 25 minutes before it went down. Perks says witnesses saw the private plane performing acrobatics before the crash.

New Zealand authorities shut down 'Occupy' camps

AUCKLAND, New Zealand (AP)—Authorities have effectively shut down the Occupy movement in New Zealand's largest city after more than 100 days of protest. Auckland Council officers and police Monday confiscated cars, tents and camping gear from more than 50 protesters at four sites in Auckland. The raid came after a local court ruled authorities could remove property from people who were illegally camping. Police arrested three people in Aotea Square during the raids.

World

Yemen's president leaves for US, hands over power

SANAA, Yemen (AP)—Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh left his battered nation Sunday on his way to the U.S. for medical treatment after passing power to his deputy and asking for forgiveness for any "shortcomings" during his 33-year rein.

But in a sign that Saleh's role as Yemen's top power broker is likely far from over, he said he would return to Yemen before the official power transfer next month to serve as the head of his ruling party.

Saleh's departure marks a small achievement in the months of diplomatic efforts by the U.S. and Yemen's powerful Gulf neighbors to ease the nearly year-old political crisis in the Arab world's poorest country. An active al-Qaida branch there has taken advantage of the turmoil, stepping up operations and seizing territory.

After months of diplomatic pressure and mass protests calling for his ouster, Saleh signed a deal in November to transfer authority to his vice president in exchange for immunity from prosecution. Still, Saleh continued to exercise power behind the scenes, sparking accusations he sought to scuttle the deal and cling to power.

His departure could help the deal go forward.

Presidential spokesman Ahmed al-Soufi told The Associated Press that Saleh left Yemen's capital Sanaa late Sunday on a plane headed for the Gulf sultanate of Oman. He did not say how long Saleh would remain there, but added that he would make "another stop before heading to the United States of America."

A senior administration official said Ali Abdullah Saleh would travel to New York this week, and probably stay in the U.S. until no later than the end of February. U.S. officials believe Saleh's exit from Yemen could lower the risk of disruptions in the lead-up to presidential elections planned there on Feb. 21.

The Obama administration faced a dilemma in deciding whether to let Saleh enter the U.S. after he requested a visa last month. It has long seen getting Saleh out of Yemen as an important step in ensuring the power transfer goes forward.

But some in the administration worried that welcoming Saleh would spark charges from the Arab world that the U.S. was harboring an autocrat responsible for deadly crackdowns on protesters.

To protect against this, the administration has sought assurances that Saleh will not seek to remain in the U.S.

An official close to Saleh said Sunday the president would undergo medical exams in Oman before heading to the U.S. The U.S. has forbidden him from any political activity in the U.S., the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorize to disclose diplomatic talks.

AP

Protestors react after receiving the news of the departure of Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh from Sanaa to Oman in Sanaa, Yemen, Jan. 22, 2012.

Saleh is likely seeking treatment for injuries sustained in a blast in his palace mosque last June 3 that left him badly burned. After the attack, Saleh traveled to Saudi Arabia for treatment, leaving many to suspect his power was waning. A few months later, however, he made a surprise return to Yemen and resumed his post.

Under the power transfer deal signed in November, Vice President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi is to be rubber-stamped as the country's new leader in presidential elections. The political parties that signed the deal agreed not to nominate any other candidates.

In a farewell speech Friday reported by Yemeni state media, Saleh said he was passing his powers to Hadi, whom he promoted to the rank of marshal.

Saleh portrayed himself as a patriot who "gave his life in the service of the nation," called for reconciliation and apologized for any mistakes.

"I ask for forgiveness from all sons of the nation, women and men, for any shortcomings during my 33 years in office," Saleh said according to Yemen's state news agency.

He also called on Yemen's youth, who have spearheaded the mass protests calling for his ouster and often faced deadly crackdowns by Saleh's security forces, to go home.

"I feel for you and call on you to return to your homes and turn a new page with a new leadership," he said.

Arab League extends Syria mission 1 more month

BEIRUT (AP)—A clash between Syrian forces and army defectors erupted Sunday in a suburb of the tightly held capital of Damascus, adding urgency just as the Arab League was extending an observers' mission that so far has failed to end long months of bloody violence.

The two events outlined how an uprising against President Bashar Assad that started with mass popular protests is moving now toward an armed conflict that could draw international intervention—an outcome the Arab League is trying to avoid.

Arab League foreign ministers, meeting in Cairo, extended the much-criticized observers mission for another month, according to a statement from the 22-member organization.

The League decided to add more observers and provide them with additional resources, the officials said.

The observer mission is supposed to be the first step toward implementing an Arab League plan to end the Syria crisis. Other points are pulling heavy Syrian weapons out of cities, stopping attacks on protesters, opening talks with the opposition and allowing foreign human rights workers and journalists in.

"There is partial progress in the implementation of the promises," Arab League chief Nabil Elaraby said in Cairo about Syria's implementation of the plan. Syria "did not carry out all its promises, although there are some implementation of pledges."

He added that the use of "extreme force" by Syrian forces have led to a reaction by the opposition "in what could lead to civil war."

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheik Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al Thani told reporters after the meeting that the Arab League was launching a new initiative to solve the crisis in which the Syrian government and the opposition would form a unity government with in two weeks to lead to the country through a transitional period in which elections would be held and a new constitution written.

It was seen as highly unlikely that Syrian authorities or the leaders of Syria's scattered opposition would agree to such a plan.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal told reporters that his country will pull out its observers because "the Syrian government did not implement the Arab plan." He urged Muslim countries, China, Russia, Europe and the U.S. to put pressure on Assad's government to stop the violence.

Saudi Arabia has been one of the harshest Arab critics of the crackdown, It recalled its ambassador from Damascus last year in protest.

So far the observer mission has not gone well. Though some credit it with tamping down violence in some places, the Local Coordination Committees activist group said Sunday that 976 people, including 54 children and 28 women, have been killed since the observers began their mission last month.

The U.N. estimates some 5,400 have been killed since it began in March.

Official: possibility of unregistered passengers

GIGLIO, Italy (AP)—Unregistered passengers might have been aboard the stricken cruise liner that capsized off this Tuscan island, a top rescue official said Sunday, raising the possibility that the number of missing might be higher than previously announced.

Divers, meanwhile, pulled out a woman's body from the capsized *Costa Concordia* on Sunday, raising to 13 the number of people dead in the Jan. 13 accident.

Civil protection official Francesca Maffini told reporters the victim was wearing a life vest and was found in the rear of a submerged portion of a ship by a team of fire department divers.

Earlier, Italian authorities raised the possibility that the real number of the missing was unknown because some unregistered passengers might have been aboard. As of Sunday, 19 people are listed as missing, but that number could be higher.

"There could have been X persons who we don't know about who were inside, who were clandestine" passengers aboard the ship, Franco Gabrielli, the national civil protection official in charge of the rescue effort, told reporters at a briefing on the island of Giglio, where the ship, with 4,200 people aboard rammed a reef and sliced open its hull on Jan. 13 before turning over on its side.

Gabrielli said that relatives of a Hungarian woman have told Italian authorities that she had telephoned them from aboard the ship and that they haven't heard from her since the accident. He said it was possible that a woman's body pulled from the wreckage by divers on Saturday might be that of the unregistered passenger.

But one of Concordia's officers, who's recovering from a broken leg suffered during the evacuation, dismissed the allegation that such passengers were on the ship.

"Everyone is registered and photographed. Everything's electronic," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Manrico Giampedroni as saying.

Authorities are trying to identify five corpses who are badly decomposed after spending a long time in the water.

Gabrielli said they have identified the other eight bodies: four French, an Italian, a Hungarian, a German and a Spanish national.

The missing include French passengers, an elderly American couple, a Peruvian crewwoman and an Indian crewman and an Italian father and his five-year-old daughter. Some of their relatives were briefed by rescuers Sunday, and also met with Pierluigi Foschi, the CEO of Costa Crociere, SpA—the ship's operator—who viewed the crippled cruise liner from a boat.

France's ambassador to Italy, Alain Le Roy, recounted Foschi's visit.

"He came to see the families, all families. He met the French family. He met the American family. I am sure he is meeting other families, mostly to express his compassion ... to say that Costa will do everything possible to find the people, to compensate families in any way."

WORLD BRIEFS

Death toll in Nigeria attack rises, stuns leader

KANO, Nigeria (AP)—People in this north Nigeria city once wore surgical masks to block the dust swirling through its sprawling neighborhoods, but swarming children hawked the masks for pennies apiece Sunday to block the stench of death at a hospital overflowing with the dead following a coordinated attack by a radical Islamist sect. The Nigerian Red Cross now estimates more than 150 people died in Friday's attack in Kano, which saw at least two suicide bombers from the sect known as Boko Haram detonate explosive-laden cars. The scope of the attack, apparently planned to free sect members held by authorities here, left even President Goodluck Jonathan speechless as he toured what remained of a regional police headquarters Sunday. "The federal government will not rest until we arrest the perpetrators of this act," Jonathan said earlier. "They are not spirits, they are not ghosts."

Croatia says 'yes' to EU membership

ZAGREB, Croatia (AP)—Croatians voted Sunday in favor of joining the European Union despite a poor turnout for the referendum—a sign of how much the debt-stricken 27-nation bloc has lost its appeal within countries aspiring to join. Croatia's state referendum commission said that with nearly all ballots counted, about 66 percent of those who took part in the referendum answered "yes" to the question: "Do you support the membership of the Republic of Croatia in the European Union?" About 33 percent were against, while the rest of the ballots were invalid. About 47 percent of eligible voters took part in the referendum, illustrating voters' apathy toward the EU. That compares to 84 percent who voted in a referendum for Croatia's independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1992.

Focus

Seafarers outraged that captain jumped ship

By KARL RITTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A ferry boat, right, sails past the grounded cruise ship Costa Concordia off the Tuscan island of Giglio, Italy, Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012. AP

AP

In this photo taken on Saturday, Jan. 14, 2012, and made available, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012, Francesco Schettino, right, the captain of the luxury cruiser Costa Concordia, which ran aground off Italy's Tuscan tiny island of Isola del Giglio, is taken into custody by Carabinieri in Porto Santo Stefano, Italy. Schettino, released on Tuesday, and currently under house arrest in his hometown of Meta di Sorrento, southern Italy, is investigated for manslaughter charges and abandoning the ship.

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Seafaring tradition holds that the captain should be last to leave a sinking ship. But is it realistic to expect skippers to suppress their survival instinct amid the horror of a maritime disaster? To ask them to stare down death from the bridge, as the lights go out and the water rises, until everyone else has made it to safety?

From mariners on ships plying the world's oceans, the answer is loud and clear: Aye.

"It's a matter of honor that the master is the last to leave. Nothing less will do in this profession," said Jorgen Loren, captain of a passenger ferry operating between Sweden and Denmark and chairman of the Swedish Maritime Officer's Association.

Seamen have expressed almost universal outrage at Capt. Francesco Schettino, who faces possible charges of manslaughter, causing a shipwreck and abandoning his crippled cruise ship off Tuscany while passengers were still on board. The last charge carries a potential sentence of 12 years in prison.

Jim Staples, a captain for 20 years, who spoke Wednesday from a 1,000-foot (300-meter) cargo vessel he was captaining near New Orleans, said captains are duty-bound to stay with the ship until the situation is hopeless. When they bail early, everything falls apart.

"I'm totally embarrassed by what he did," Staples said of Schettino. "He's given the industry a bad name, he's made us all look bad. It's shameful."

Schettino should have remained on board "until the last passenger is accounted for," said Abelardo Pacheco, a Filipino captain who was held hostage for five months in Somalia and now heads a seafarers' training center in Manila.

"That is the responsibility of the captain. That's why all privileges are given to him, but he has together with that an equal burden of responsibility," Pacheco said.

The Costa Concordia, carrying more than 4,200 passengers and crew, slammed into a reef on Friday, after Schettino made an unauthorized detour from the ship's programmed route. A recording of his conversation with the Italian coast guard shows he left the ship before all passengers were off, and resisted repeated orders to go back, saying the ship was tipping and it was dark.

Schettino said he ended up in a life raft after he tripped and fell into the water. He is being held in house arrest as prosecutors prepare criminal charges.

Even if he's not convicted, it is highly unlikely he'll ever command a cruise or cargo ship again because of the damage to his reputation, said Prof. Craig Allen of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

"Some people panic, but a short time later they collect their senses and do the right thing," Allen said. "In this case there was more than enough time for the moment of panic to pass. It was abject cowardice."

Maritime experts said the tradition of a captain standing by his ship isn't established in international maritime law. Some countries, like Italy, have included it in national laws.

Others respect it as "an unwritten rule or law of the sea," said Capt. Bill Wright, senior vice president of Marine Operations for the Royal Caribbean International cruise line.

Both literature and real life offer plenty of examples of shipmasters who paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect their passengers and crew.

The most famous, perhaps, is the captain of the Titanic, E.J. Smith, who evacuated the ship—women and children first—until there were no lifeboats left, and then perished with it.

A more recent example is Robert Royer, the captain of a fishing vessel that sank off Alaska in 2010. As water gushed into the ship and the three other crew members jumped overboard, Royer stayed in the wheelhouse to make a frantic mayday call and give the ship's position to the Coast Guard. The crew said that likely saved their lives, because the ship's emergency beacon didn't work.

After more than three hours in the water, they were rescued by a Coast Guard helicopter. Royer, however, died after suffering a head injury when he finally left the ship.

Maritime experts say such manifestations of courage at sea far outnumber incidents in which captains saved themselves and left their passengers behind.

Those who did earned instant infamy, like the captain of the Greek luxury liner Oceanos, which sank in rough seas off South Africa in 1991.

The 402 passengers and 179 crew members all survived, but Capt. Yiannis Avranas and other officers left the ship while some passengers were still on board.

A magician who had been performing on the ship took over the bridge, monitoring rescue calls, as a fellow entertainer kept passengers calm by playing Beatles songs on his guitar. Avranas at the time defended his actions, saying he left the ship to direct rescue operations.

"When I order abandon ship, it doesn't matter what time I leave," Avranas said. "Abandon is for everybody. If some people like to stay, they can stay."

A Greek board of inquiry found Avranas and four officers negligent in their handling of the disaster.

In 1965, the captain and several other crew members were among the first to abandon ship after the Yarmouth Castle caught fire and started sinking off the Bahamas, killing 90. Fleeing in a lifeboat, they were told by the captain of a rescue ship to go back and help their passengers.

Captains accused of leaving prematurely often claim they can manage the situation better from the safety of a lifeboat, rescue vessel or on shore.

Allen dismissed that idea, saying the captain's knowledge of his ship is crucial in an emergency.

"Shoreside rescue people can do all the shoreside coordination efforts needed," he said. "You need someone on the ship to communicate with them, to command the people who are on the ship, to help get the passengers off and to guide the rescuers."

Rear Adm. Richard Gurnon, president of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy called Schettino's actions "abhorrent" and a violation of an unwritten code.

"It isn't just a maritime code, it's a code of leadership," Gurnon said. "If you are leader, you have responsibility for your people, they put their lives in your hands."

Steen Brodersen, a retired Danish captain, said that every single crew member, from the chief mate to the cooks, has a designated role in an emergency on a cruise ship. Regular drills ensure everyone knows what to do.

The captain must first ensure the safety of his passengers, then of his crew and, finally, of the ship, though the notion that he's supposed to go down with it is more legend than fact.

Brodersen, 60, said he never had to deal with that kind of situation, but he has sometimes thought about his own limit, when his survival instinct would trump the hope of salvaging a doomed ship.

"There must be a point at which I would think that now it is time to jump into the water so I don't die," he said. "But that would come after the ship has been evacuated," he added. "It is my responsibility. I am the captain."

Jay Lindsay in Boston; Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark; Cassandra Vinograd in London; and Teresa Cerojano, in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.

Overdrive

Less flower, more power for updated Volkswagen Beetle

NUTS & BOLTS

2012 Volkswagen Beetle:

- Base price (including destination charge): $20,565
- Price as tested: $24,165

By MATT DEGEN
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

VOLKSWAGEN/MCT
Volkswagen has given the 2012 Beetle a complete reboot.

Let's just get it out of the way: The old New Beetle—the one that resurrected VW's fabled Bug in 1998—was often referred to as a "chick car."

If you're uncertain why, look no farther than the car's built-in flower vase. That did indeed resurrect the Bug, and buyers of the female variety seemed to flock to this poppy on wheels.

But its looks had gotten long in the tooth. And no amount of flowers, literal or figurative, could overcome that. A complete reboot was needed, and Volkswagen has done exactly that with the 2012 Beetle. In the process, they've also made it more masculine.

Behold the new New Beetle.

From its exterior, you can still tell that it's a Beetle, but its round shape has become more oval and much more aggressive. This one is longer, wider and lower than the previous model. Take a good look at it and you might be reminded of its corporate cousin, the Audi TT. I sure was, and not just in aesthetics.

VW says that for this third generation of "the People's Car," it actually looked to the original Beetle, which became a worldwide phenomenon after World War II.

"The designers wanted to develop the new car around the earliest Beetle profile rather than the 1998 New Beetle," VW says of this new car. "In short, they wanted a car that respects the past but looks toward the future."

So just how does this new Beetle's future look? After a week of driving a Turbo Launch Edition, I was left with mostly a smile on my face—and only a slight sense of emasculation.

For now, Beetles come with two engine choices, including its first turbo for the car in years. A base Beetle uses VW's 2.5-liter five-cylinder engine that makes 170 horsepower. The sporty, Turbo version like the kind I drove uses a smaller, 2.0-liter four-cylinder, yet it generates more power: 200 ponies to be exact. Transmission choices are VW's excellent six-speed, dual-clutch automatic, or five- and six-speed manual transmissions.

Later this year, VW says, a diesel version of the car will be available that uses a 2.0-liter four-cylinder and is expected to get up to 40 mpg on the highway.

The turbo engine in my test model offered power as well as good, if not great, fuel economy. The car felt spunky and shifted flawlessly up and down the gears. The EPA rates this model at 22 mpg city/30 highway. In mixed driving over a week, I averaged 24.1 mpg, according to the car's computer.

What I really liked about the Beetle besides its gusto was the solid way it felt on the road. While it's a compact car, it didn't quiver or shake at speed. In this regard it felt more like an Audi TT, though in this case with power going to the front wheels instead of all four.

I also liked the way this car felt. The flat-bottomed steering wheel, for example, offers a good grip and felt great in my hands. Glaringly absent on my base model of this car, however, were steering-wheel-mounted audio controls.

Accommodations up front are good, but adult passengers in back will likely suffer. The Beetle features just two seats in back, and they are small and cramped. Cargo space, at least, has improved over the past model, growing from 12 cubic feet in the trunk to 15.4. Fold the seats down, and you nearly double that amount.

Before the Beetle arrived, I feared that as a guy I might be embarrassed to drive it. It didn't take long, though, for glee to trump any misgivings.

This hopped-up Beetle, I kept telling the curious, reminded me more of a sporty Audi TT than some flower on wheels. And it turned out to be a car that even this man could admire.

How to find the right tire pressure

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Question: I have a 2000 Lexus RX-300 and my wife has a 2003 Toyota Camry. Our owner's manuals state that the tire pressures should be 29 and 30 pounds, respectively. Our local tire shop periodically inflates both our vehicle's tires to 35 pounds. When asked, they said that the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations are for ride comfortably and that they use 35 pounds for reasonable tire wire. I inflate my own tires at home using an air compressor, so I'm confused. Should I go with the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations or the local tire shop recommendation?

Answer: This topic is one of the most common to be asked. Proper tire pressure is important for proper stability/handling, tire wear, tire structural stability, ride comfort and fuel economy. These are the factors that go into the vehicle manufacturer's numbers printed on the tire inflation placard (found on the driver's side door edge or adjacent body pillar). A tire that's underinflated for conditions will run hot, wear excessively on the outer edges, decrease vehicle stability, waste fuel, and is more likely to hydroplane during wet conditions. Load capacity (providing safe operation) decreases by roughly 100 pounds per tire for each three pounds of under-inflation—multiply by four!) An overinflated tire results in a hard ride, may wear excessively in the center of the tread, and is more likely to skid during abrupt maneuvers.

Tires list two inflation pressure numbers on the sidewall; the maximum inflation pressure (easy to find) and the pressure at which the maximum tire load is rated (usually in tiny print near the tire bead). The original equipment Bridgestone Potenza tires on your Lexus show a maximum inflation pressure of 44# and maximum load pressure of 35#, while a Yokohama AVID ENVigor, a popular replacement, lists 51# as the maximum inflation pressure and 35# maximum load pressure. Neither of the maximum inflation numbers are even close to what's best for your particular vehicle for typical use.

Your tire shop's recommendation to fudge the pressure up somewhat from the door placard numbers is reasonable, as long as you're OK with a firmer ride and vehicle handling is unaffected. They've probably seen a lot of tires that have worn prematurely on the outer edges due to insufficient pressure, aggressive driving techniques, or heavier than typical vehicle loading. If a driver meticulously maintains their tires at the placard value (most of us don't) and the wheels are correctly aligned, they should wear evenly.

Try this: inflate one front tire to 29# and the other to 35#, spray some water on your driveway, and look at the subsequent tracks on the dry pavement. If the two tracks are of identical width and uniform, I'd feel comfortable with the increase in pressure. If the higher pressure tire shows a narrower track, back off the pressure. I'd personally consider an increase of perhaps 3-4#, rather than 6. In no case would I increase pressure beyond the "maximum load at xx pressure" on the tire, it simply has no benefit.

When checking tire pressure, it's important to do so when they're cold. After warmed by the sun or driving the pressure increases by about five pounds. This is normal, don't deflate them if checked when warm. Of the four or so tire gauges I own, I've found up to a 5# difference in readings (the worst one was tossed!). Lesson learned: pay a little more for a good gauge and periodically validate it against a known good one.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Leasing a car: Five tips

By SCOTT J. WILSON
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Leasing a car is rarely the most economical way to have an auto at your disposal. But if you like to have a new car every two or three years, leasing could be the way to go. Here are five tips on leasing a car without getting ripped off.

■ **Prepare.** Edmunds.com and Leaseguide.com are helpful resources, with free features such as online calculators to estimate payments. Also, you can learn the jargon on these sites so salespeople won't baffle you with terms such as "residual value" or "money factor."

■ **Calculate mileage.** Many leases charge a penalty if you put more than 10,000 or 12,000 miles on the car in a year, and that could be a problem if you have a substantial commute. Do an honest assessment of your yearly driving before you take on a lease.

■ **Consider length of lease.** For warranty purposes, Edmunds.com says a term of three years or less is best. "The majority of carmakers offer three-year bumper-to-bumper warranties," the site says. "If your lease is for three years you will always be under warranty without paying extra for an extended service contract."

■ **Comparison-shop.** After determining which car you want to lease, call several dealers in your area to ask for their offers. To best compare, make sure the upfront payment, number of miles allowed and length of term are the same. Also, check manufacturers' websites for specials.

■ **Watch out for extra costs.** Edmunds warns that when you go to a dealer to complete the deal, a salesperson might push extras, such as extended service contracts, fabric protection, alarms or vehicle locater devices. "In most cases, we recommend turning down these extras," the website says.

Life&Style

Teen ends globe-circling voyage in St. Maarten

By JUDY FITZPATRICK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILIPSBURG, St. Maarten (AP)—Laura Dekker set a steady foot aboard a dock in St. Maarten on Saturday, ending a yearlong voyage aboard a sailboat named "Guppy" that apparently made her the youngest person ever to sail alone around the globe, though her trip was interrupted at several points.

Dozens of people jumped and cheered as Dekker waved, wept and then walked across the dock accompanied by her mother, father, sister and grandparents, who had greeted her at sea earlier.

Dekker arrived in St. Maarten after struggling against high seas and heavy winds on a final, 41-day leg from Cape Town, South Africa.

"There were moments where I was like, 'What the hell am I doing out here?,' but I never wanted to stop," she told reporters. "It's a dream, and I wanted to do it."

Dekker claims she is the youngest sailor to complete a round-the-world voyage, but Guinness World Records and the World Sailing Speed Record Council did not verify the claim, saying they no longer recognize records for youngest sailors to discourage dangerous attempts.

Dutch authorities tried to block Dekker's trip, arguing she was too young to risk her life, while school officials complained she should be in a classroom.

Dekker said she was born to parents living on a boat near the coast of New Zealand and said she first sailed solo at 6 years old. At 10, she said, she began dreaming about crossing the globe. She celebrated her 16th birthday during the trip, eating doughnuts for breakfast after spending time at port with her father and friends the night before in Darwin, Australia.

The teenager covered more than 27,000 nautical miles on a trip with stops that sound like a skim through a travel magazine: the Canary Islands, Panama, the Galapagos Islands, Tonga, Fiji, Bora Bora, Australia, South Africa and now, St. Maarten, from which she set out on Jan. 20, 2011.

"Her story is just amazing," said one of Dekker's fans, 10-year-old Jody Bell of Connecticut. "I can't imagine someone her age going out on sea all by herself."

Bell was in St. Maarten on a work trip with her mother, Deena Merlen, an attorney in Manhattan, who wanted to see Dekker complete her journey. The two wore T-shirts that read: "Guppy rocks my world."

"My daughter and I have been following Laura's story, and we think it's amazing and inspiring," Merlen said.

Unlike other young sailors who recently crossed the globe, Dekker repeatedly anchored at ports along the way to sleep, study and repair her 38-foot (11.5-meter) sailboat.

During her trip, she went surfing, scuba diving, cliff diving and discovered a new hobby: playing the flute, which she said in her weblog was easier to play than a guitar in bad weather.

Dekker also complained about custom clearings, boat inspections, ripped sails, heavy squalls, a wet and salty bed, a near-collision with two cargo ships and the presence of some persistent stowaways: cockroaches.

"I became good friends with my boat," she said. "I learned a lot about myself."

Highlights of her trip include 47 days of sailing the Indian Ocean, which left her with unsteady legs when she docked in Durban, South Africa, where she walked up and down the pier several times for practice.

While in South Africa, she also saw her first whale.

"It dove right in front of my boat and got all this water on my boat, and that wasn't really nice," she said.

Dekker launched her trip two months after Abby Sunderland, a 16-year-old U.S. sailor, was rescued in the middle of the Indian Ocean during a similar attempt. Jessica Watson of Australia completed a 210-day solo voyage at age 16, a few months older than Dekker.

Dekker had said she planned to move to New Zealand after her voyage, but she said Saturday that she wants to finish school first. If she goes to New Zealand, she said, she'd like to sail there.

AP

Dutch sailor Laura Dekker throws a rope as she docks her boat in Simpson Bay Marina in St. Maarten, Saturday Jan. 21, 2012.

Penn shares film's dream of ducking stardom

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—Sean Penn's new movie casts him as a former rock star who turns his back on stardom and goes into exile overseas.

Penn can relate. He said in an interview Sunday that he has thought often about ducking out of the limelight.

He stars in "This Must Be the Place," which had its U.S. premiere at the Sundance Film Festival. Penn first came to Utah about 27 years ago with "The Falcon and the Snowman."

Penn

The film, directed by Paolo Sorrentino, stars Penn as Cheyenne, a raven-maned, mascara-caked former pop icon whose look was inspired by Robert Smith of the Cure. The childlike Cheyenne has left behind the glamor of his old life and now lives quietly in Ireland with his firefighter wife, played by Frances McDormand.

After his father's death, lost soul Cheyenne embarks on a road trip across the United States to track down a former Nazi who brutalized his dad in a concentration camp.

Penn said he empathizes with Cheyenne's decision to get out of the spotlight.

"Turning one's back on stardom might be the highest form of common sense. One that I would aspire to be more complete with," Penn said.

"I don't think it's an overstatement to say that it's an obscene disease of celebrity that's taken over far too much of the life that we do live. I think it's a disease. I think that it's diminished the quality of life. Not particularly for the people who are the focus of it, though that is clearly something that I've been compromised by. But for the culture at large, there is this kind of herd commitment. ... I think it's just become cheap."

"This Must Be the Place" owes its start to the Cannes Film Festival, where Penn headed the jury that awarded prizes in 2008.

Penn's panel presented Sorrentino's political drama "Il Divo" with the festival's third-place jury prize. The actor and the director found themselves standing beside each other for a group photo at the Cannes closing ceremony.

'The Artist' silent but golden at producer awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Artist" followed its Golden Globe win by taking top honors at the Producers Guild Awards on Saturday, as the silent film continues its unlikely run toward Oscar night.

Producer Thomas Langmann received the award handed out at the Beverly Hilton by the Producers Guild of America, as "The Artist" beat out George Clooney's family drama and another Oscar favorite, "The Descendants."

"The Artist" won best musical or comedy at Sunday's Golden Globes and "The Descendants" won best drama along with a best actor nod for Clooney, making the movies likely rivals for Best Picture at the Academy Awards.

The other nominees in the movie category were "War Horse," ''The Help," ''Bridesmaids," ''Hugo," ''The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," ''Midnight in Paris," ''Moneyball" and another Clooney movie, "The Ides of March."

Along with honors from other Hollywood professional groups such as actors, directors and writers guilds, the producer prizes have become part of the preseason sorting out contenders for the Oscars, whose nominations come out on Tuesday.

HBO's saga of mobsters in Prohibition-era Atlantic City "Boardwalk Empire" won the producers' award for television drama series, keeping AMC's 1960s advertising agency drama "Mad Men" from winning its fourth straight PGA Award.

A team of seven producers including Martin Scorcese received the award for "Boardwalk Empire," which also beat out Showtime's "Dexter," CBS's "The Good Wife," and another HBO series, "Game of Thrones."

The ABC network's "Modern Family" took the award for best TV comedy series for the second straight year, beating "30 Rock," ''The Big Bang Theory," ''Glee," and "Parks and Recreation."

Other winners at the PGA awards included PBS's "Downton Abbey" for long-form television, "The Adventures of Tintin" for animated film, "Beats, Rhymes & Life" for movie documentary, and "The Colbert Report" for talk and live entertainment shows.

Eugenides, Lethem among critics' awards nominees

NEW YORK (AP)—Novelist Jeffrey Eugenides, science-technology writer James Gleick and the late historian Manning Marable were among the nominees announced for the National Book Critics Circle awards

Eugenides was cited for "The Marriage Plot," a novel in part about a subject close to reviewers—the love of books. It's his first release since winning the Pulitzer Prize in 2003 for "Middlesex." Other fiction finalists included short story writer Edith Pearlman, whose "Binocular Vision" was a National Book Award nominee last fall; Alan Hollinghurst's acclaimed "The Stranger"; Dana Spiotta's "Stone Arabia" and Teju Cole's debut novel "Open City."

Five finalists in each of six categories were selected this weekend by the critics circle, founded in 1974. Great reviews do not guarantee an NBCC nomination. Some of the year's best-received books were among the missing, including Chad Harbach's "The Art of Fielding," Karen Russell's "Swamplandia" and Christopher Hitchens' "Arguably."

Winners will be announced March 8. No cash prizes are given.

Gleick was a nominee in nonfiction for "The Information," a review of how information has been shared through the centuries and its singular importance in modern times. The other nonfiction finalists were Amanda Foreman's "A World on Fire: Britain's Crucial Role in the American Civil War"; Adam Hochschild's "To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914-1918"; Maya Jasanoff's "Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary War" and John Jeremiah Sullivan's "Pulphead: Essays."

In biography, Marable was cited for "Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention," which he worked on for more than a decade. He died last year just before the book's release. Also picked for biography were Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis' "George F. Kennan: An American Life"; Mary Gabriel's "Love and Capital: Karl and Jenny Marx and the Birth of the Revolution"; Paul Hendrickson's "Hemingway's Boat: Everything He Loved in Life, and Lost, 1934-1961," and Ezra F. Vogel's "Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China."

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Haywire

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Gina Carano, Michael Douglas
Thriller, Spy film • Rated R

Synopsis

Mixed martial arts fighter Gina Carano makes her feature-film debut as a lethal government contractor who's betrayed by her own agency in this action thriller from writer Lem Dobbs (The Limey) and director Steven Soderbergh (Traffic, Contagion). Mallory Kane (Carano) is the woman the U.S. government calls on to take care of their dirty work. She's fast, efficient, and—perhaps most important of all—clean. But when Mallory makes the mistake of saving a Chinese journalist from certain death, she becomes an enemy to the very same government she once served. Mallory isn't going down without a fight, though, and after a close brush with death, she realizes that the only way to save her own life is to reveal the government's deception.

Underworld: Awakening

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Kate Beckinsale, Stephen Rea
Horror • Rated R

Red Tails

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Cuba Gooding, Jr., Terrence Howard
War • Rated PG 13

★ ★ ★

Contraband

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Mark Wahlberg, Kate Beckinsale
Action • Rated R

Joyful Noise

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Queen Latifah, Dolly Parton
Comedy • Rated PG 13

War Horse

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Jeremy Irvine, Emily Watson
Drama, War • Rated PG 13

Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol

Friday		7:15	9:55
Saturday		7:15	9:55
Sunday		7:15	
Monday thru Thursday		7:15	

Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner
Spy film, Action • Rated PG 13

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked

Friday		4:15	
Saturday	1:15	4:15	
Sunday	1:15	4:15	
Monday thru Thursday		4:15	

Jason Lee
Children's/family • Rated G

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Weaver revisits paranormal with 'Red Lights'

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—Sigourney Weaver may not believe in ghosts, but the paranormal world of her latest film is not alien territory for her.

Weaver's Sundance Film Festival premiere, "Red Lights," is a dark exploration of the supernatural realm she previously took on in comic mode with "Ghostbusters" and its sequel.

"I probably don't believe in fairies and ghosts, but I certainly believe that people have souls," Weaver, 62, said in an interview. "I think that, and that there's more going on around us than we can explain in a rational way."

What did surprise Weaver in preparing for her role is "what a huge business psychic entertainment was," she said.

"Red Lights" features Weaver as a skeptic whose life's work is debunking phony claims of the paranormal. The film from writer-director Rodrigo Cortes co-stars Robert De Niro as a superstar of the psychic realm, Cillian Murphy as Weaver's assistant and Elizabeth Olsen as one of their students.

There has been talk of a third "Ghostbusters" movie that would reunite Weaver with Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and other co-stars. Weaver likes the idea but has doubts it will happen.

"I'd love to work with everybody again," Weaver said. "I think, mmm, at this point, I think it's probably less than 50-50. That's what I think."

Another sequel to one of Weaver's blockbusters definitely is on. But Weaver cannot say much about "Avatar 2," James Cameron's next chapter in his science-fiction franchise. The first "Avatar" film was the biggest commercial smash of modern times, making $2.8 billion worldwide.

AP

Actor Cillian Murphy, left, actress Sigourney Weaver, center, and writer Rodrigo Cortes, from the film "Red Lights," pose for a portrait during the 2012 Sundance Film Festival on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2012, in Park City, Utah.

Weaver's character died and underwent a cosmic transformation in "Avatar." But Weaver has been bumped off before in her "Alien" sci-fi franchise and came back to battle on in another sequel.

"As Jim would say, there's no death in science fiction," Weaver said. "But no, I can't really talk about it. But I am looking forward to it."

Weaver is more talkative about a film that's an offshoot of the franchise that made her a star. In Ridley Scott's 1979 hit "Alien," Weaver played Ellen Ripley, the lone survivor of a spaceship crew terrorized by an unstoppable creature.

She earned a best-actress Academy Award nomination as Ripley in Cameron's 1986 follow-up "Aliens," and she reprised the role in two more sequels.

Scott makes his return to science fiction with this summer's "Prometheus," a cousin to "Alien" that stars Charlize Theron, Noomi Rapace and Michael Fassbender. The director and his actors have been coy about whether "Prometheus" is an outright prequel to "Alien," though they have said there are connections between the films, and the trailer for the new one has images resembling the design and features of the 1979 tale.

"Whatever they call it, I think everyone's very excited to see what Ridley does with some of these wonderful elements, and I think I'll be just as excited as everybody," Weaver said. "I don't really want to know anything about it. I have great confidence in him, and I'm sure they'll make a wonderful movie."

Could Weaver ever imagine resurrecting Ripley for another film?

"No. Let the poor woman rest," Weaver said. "No one ever believed her, anyway. They gave her such a hard time."

'Underworld' sinks teeth into box office with $25M

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kate Beckinsale is back with a vengeance, with her latest "Underworld" movie opening at No. 1 this weekend.

"Underworld Awakening" made an estimated $25.4, distributor Sony Screen Gems reported Sunday.

This is the fourth film in the vampire action saga. Beckinsale starred in the first two movies as the warrior Selene, then bowed out of part three but returned for this latest installment. "Underworld Awakening" was shown for the first time in 3-D as well as on IMAX screens, where it made $3.8 million. That's 15 percent of the film's weekend gross, which is a record for an IMAX digital-only run.

Sony had hoped the film would end up in the low-$20 million range. But Rory Bruer, the studio's president of worldwide distribution, says the fact that it did even better—despite a snow storm that hit much of the Midwest and East Coast—primarily has to do with Beckinsale's return.

"She is such a force. Her character—you just can't take your eyes off of her. I know the character is very dear to her, as well, and she just kills it," Bruer said. "The 3-D aspect of the film also brings something, makes it a fun, visceral ride."

1. **"Underworld Awakening,"** $25.4 million ($13.4 million international).
2. **"Red Tails,"** $19.1 million.
3. **"Contraband,"** $12.2 million.
4. **"Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close,"** $10.5 million.
5. **"Haywire,"** $9 million.
6. **"Beauty and the Beast (3-D),"** $8.6 million.
7. **"Joyful Noise,"** $6.1 million.
8. **"Mission: Impossible—Ghost Protocol,"** $5.5 million. ($9.4 million international).
9. **"Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows,"** $4.8 million. ($18.1 million international).
10. **"The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,"** $3.75 million ($15.7 international).

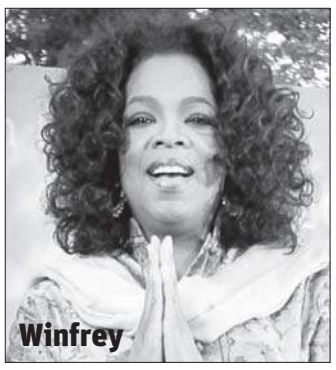
Opening in second place was "Red Tails" from executive producer George Lucas, about the Tuskegee Airmen who were the first black fighter pilots to serve in World War II. It made an estimated $19.1 million, according to 20th Century Fox, which was well above expectations; the studio had hoped to reach double digits, said Chris Aronson, executive vice president of domestic distribution.

Hollywood.com analyst Paul Dergarabedian said a grassroots effort to get groups of people into the theaters to see "Red Tails," along with positive word-of-mouth, helped its strong showing. The film saw an uptick from about $6 million on Friday to $8.65 million on Saturday.

Overall box office is up 31 percent from the same weekend a year ago, Dergarabedian said, thanks to new releases as well as movies like "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close," which had limited runs for awards consideration at the end of 2011 and are now expanding nationwide. The Sept. 11 drama from Warner Bros., starring Tom Hanks and Sandra Bullock, came in fourth place with $10.5 million.

Last week's No. 1 film, the Universal smuggling thriller "Contraband" starring Mark Wahlberg, dropped to the No. 3 spot with $12.2 million. It's now made $46.1 million in two weeks. Meanwhile, Steven Soderbergh's international action picture "Haywire" from Relativity Media, starring mixed martial arts superstar Gina Carano in her first film role, opened in fifth place with $9 million, which was above expectations.

As for worldwide box office, "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1" has now crossed the $700 million mark. The first half of the finale of the girl-vampire-werewolf love triangle franchise has grossed an estimated $701.3 million in global box office receipts since its release last November, according to Lionsgate, which recently acquired Summit Entertainment, which distributes the series.


Winfrey

Oprah confident Obama will win re-election

JAIPUR, India (AP)—Oprah Winfrey says she is confident that President Barack Obama will win another four-year term in this year's U.S. election.

The talk show host was addressing a literary festival Sunday in the northwestern Indian town of Jaipur.

Winfrey praised Obama's handling of the presidency. She said his next four years would be even more successful, with people able to get back to work.

Winfrey backed Obama during the 2008 presidential campaign in her first-ever political endorsement.

She was among the biggest crowd pullers at the annual Jaipur Literary Festival, which brings together top writers, poets and critics and around 50,000 literary fans from around the world.

Winfrey has been in India for a week filming programs for her new TV network.

Arnie visits Austrian town run on green energy

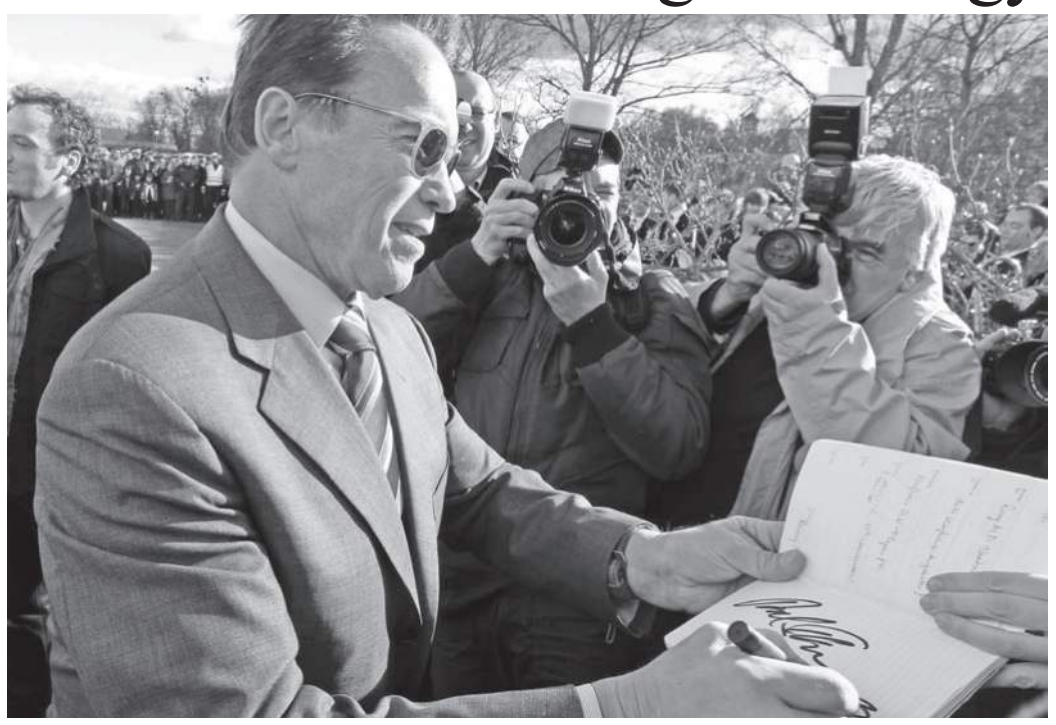
GUESSING, Austria (AP)—It was another chance to tuck into a schnitzel. But Arnold Schwarzenegger's visit to a small eastern Austrian town had a more compelling purpose.

Austria's most famous living son is proud of his record of greening California while governor. So his visit to Guessing, which meets its energy needs through renewables, was fitting.

In both Guessing and California, "the world has already become a better one," he told fans and dignitaries gathered in his honor Sunday.

After a lunch of Wiener schnitzel and Kaiserscharrn—chopped up pancakes with jam—Arnie toured the village's energy plants, describing his push for green energy as "my crusade."

And yes, the "Terminator" star did say, "I'll be back."


AP

Former Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger signs an autograph upon his arrival in Guessing in the province of Burgenland, Austria, on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012.

Danes wins pudding pot from Harvard drama group

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts (AP)—Golden Globe winner Claire Danes will be picking up a pudding pot from Harvard's Hasty Pudding Theatricals.

The student group named Danes on Friday as its Woman of the Year. She'll get a parade and a roast Jan. 26.

Danes won her third Golden Globe on Sunday for her role as CIA agent Carrie Mathison on Showtime's new "Homeland." She won a Golden Globe, an Emmy and a Screen Actors Guild award last year for her work in HBO's "Temple Grandin."

The 32-year-old gained attention at 15 when she won her first Golden Globe and an Emmy nomination for "My So Called Life."

Julianne Moore won the Harvard club's award last year.

The Man of the Year will be announced next week and honored Feb. 3. Jay Leno won last year.

Danes

AP

In this Feb. 13, 2011 file photo, Heidi Klum, left, and Seal arrive at the 53rd annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

Seal, Heidi Klum announce separation

NEW YORK (AP)—The seemingly perfect marriage of Seal and Heidi Klum is heading to an end.

In a statement Sunday night, the power-couple announced their separation. They say after "much soul searching" they've decided to separate, and blame the breakup on "growing apart."

The couple has four children together, including the supermodel's daughter from a previous relationship. The couple asks for privacy and say that the breakup is "amicable."

The singer and model were one of the most high-profile celebrity couples, and often talked about their tight relationship. They even renewed their vows on each anniversary.

They married in 2005.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Razzies worst-movie awards shift to April Fool's

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hollywood's award season is going to linger on through April Fool's Day this year. Organizers of the Razzies have changed the schedule for their nominations and prize ceremony. The spoof on the Academy Awards picks the year's worst films. The Razzies used to announce contenders the night before the Oscar nominations, which are coming Tuesday. Razzies founder John Wilson announced Sunday that nominations this season will be released Feb. 25, the eve of the Oscar ceremony. Winners of the Razzies will be announced on April 1. Wilson says Razzies organizers have long wanted to have their awards coincide with April Fool's Day. A news release announcing the change also notes that it will give the 600 Razzies voters "additional time to see the dreck they will eventually nominate."

Brooks chokes up testifying about hospital gift

CLAREMORE, Okla. (AP)—Country singer Garth Brooks has given a tearful account to an Oklahoma jury of his failed efforts to honor his late mother by getting a women's health center named after her. Brooks choked up Friday while testifying in his lawsuit against Integris Canadian Valley Regional Hospital. He is seeking the return of $500,000 he gave the hospital and punitive damages. Brooks says he donated the money to the hospital in his hometown of Yukon thinking he had a deal with its president, James Moore, to name a planned women's center after his late mother, Colleen. But the women's center was never built. Moore says there was never such an agreement. Brooks' accountant testified earlier Friday that she didn't know of any conditions tied to the donation.

Comedian Harvey heads to principal's office

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama (AP)—Steve Harvey is relinquishing his role as one of the Original Kings of Comedy to become an Alabama school principal—at least for one day. Students at Phillips Academy in Birmingham will be answering to Principal Steve Harvey on Thursday after the school won a contest sponsored by Harvey's morning radio show and General Mills. The Birmingham News reports that Angela Strozier, mother of an eighth grader at Phillips Academy, who entered the contest by submitting an essay about the school's success. She also described how the deadly tornado outbreak in Alabama last April had affected many Phillips students. In a statement, Harvey said he was impressed by the school's "strong parental and community involvement."

Dad's patient instruction gave teen confidence behind wheel

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Like "I'd Rather Walk in Houston" (Nov. 12), I learned to drive as a high school senior. My father taught me in a local park. As I learned to operate the car, I gained confidence, but I was still not ready for street traffic. He said I was a "slow learner," but didn't force me onto the streets. After several more rounds in the park, I was able to face traffic. Yes, I was uneasy, but having Dad in the passenger seat boosted my confidence. I drove with supervision for several months to get accustomed to the controls and learn to avoid other cars and curbs.

My solo drive was prom night. By the time I arrived at my date's home I felt as if I had showered in my tux! After the dance, miraculously, I felt relaxed and comfortable behind the wheel.

My supervised driving was a big help. Talking about safe driving and seeing videos may not have the same effect as driving with a critic in the passenger seat.

DRIVING SINCE '59 IN CLARKSVILLE, TENN.

DEAR DRIVING: Everyone—and I mean EVERYONE—seems to have an anecdote about their early driving experiences. My office was inundated. My newspaper readers' comments:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I also struggled with an unbearable fear of driving. I took cabs and walked, even though I had a car and a valid license. I declined invitations when they meant I would have to drive. It only got worse after I moved to a larger city.

I finally sought help and was diagnosed with an anxiety disorder that manifested behind the wheel. I now take medication and have learned coping skills to handle my feelings. I am still very cautious, but I'm no longer housebound. In fact, I sometimes even enjoy taking the scenic route. I agree with you that "Rather" should see a therapist who can show her techniques to calm herself before and during trips.

CAUTIOUS DRIVER

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I had many of the same fears. I was afraid something bad would happen if I was driving alone in the car. Even though I was 18, I didn't feel old enough or responsible enough to be driving.

Once I got my license, I loved driving! If I had realized earlier what a sense of freedom and maturity getting my license would give me, I would have gotten it the day I turned 16.

ALSO A LATE DRIVER

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: "Rather" has good reason to fear driving: Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among U.S. teens. In 2009, about 3,000 teens ages 15 to 19 were killed and 350,000 were treated in emergency rooms. After graduation she can choose a college in an urban area with sidewalks, bicycle lanes and good public transit and minimize—or even eliminate—the need to drive.

People who walk are less likely to experience many health problems. They are not the ones who should consider talking to a therapist. Rather, it is those drivers who account for the 65 percent of trips under a mile that are taken by car.

PROMOTING TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: If "Rather" wants to drive and just needs to get past the initial fear that comes along with the enormous responsibility, then your advice was on target for how to get over her insecurity. However, if she just prefers to walk, I can tell her from personal experience that a person can function just fine, especially in a large city.

I took driver's ed when I was 16 and never got comfortable driving, nor did I feel the need to get my license. I am now 33, living in a large city. I walk to my job, the grocery store and anywhere else I need to go. If I choose to venture farther, there is public transportation. I am self-sufficient. I have never yearned to have my driver's license, and I am totally comfortable being a pedestrian.

HAPPY ON FOOT IN MILWAUKEE

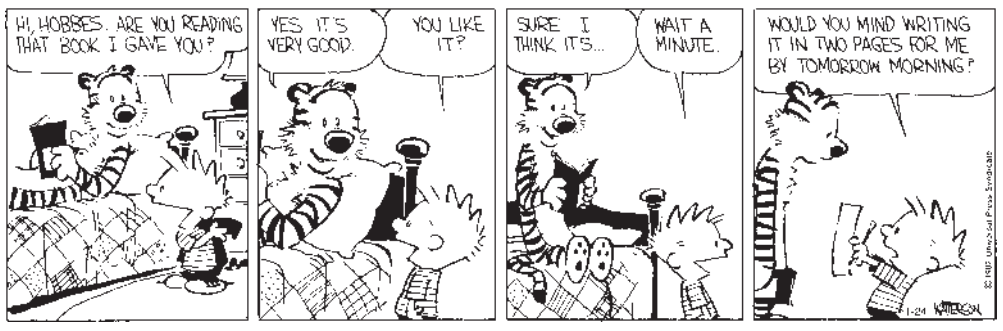
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HI, HOBBES. ARE YOU READING THAT BOOK I GAVE YOU?
YES. IT'S VERY GOOD.
YOU LIKE IT?
SURE. I THINK IT'S...
WAIT A MINUTE.
WOULD YOU MIND WRITING IT IN TWO PAGES FOR ME BY TOMORROW MORNING?
© 1989 Universal Press Syndicate
1-24 WATTERSON

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THAT PERFUME YOU'RE WEARING?
YOU PROBABLY SMELL THE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE IN MY PURSE
THAT'S A LONG NAME
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL MY LIFE?
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield
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Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

SIR? ARE YOU OKAY?
AM I IN HEAVEN?
UMM. SORT OF. YOU'RE IN THE CHEESE AISLE OF THE SUPERMARKET.
© 2012 Universal Uclick www.gocomics.com
MARCELL 1-24

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

BEEN GROCERY SHOPPING?
YEP.
WHAT KIND OF ROOM DEODORIZER IS THAT?
THIS? THIS IS A STICK-UP.
BANK TELLER
© 2012 Glenn McCoy / Universal Uclick www.glennmccoy.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

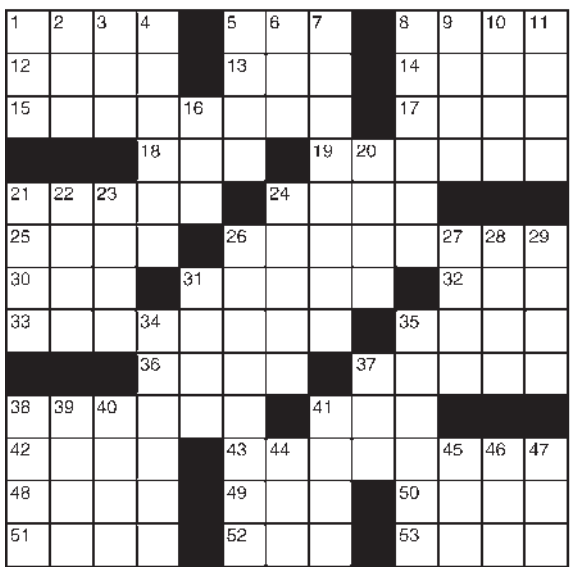
ACROSS
1 Pinnacle
5 "Eureka!"
8 — Minor
12 Tibetan monk
13 Book-spine abbr.
14 Night light?
15 Pillages
17 Entanglement
18 Atmosphere
19 Whoppers' toppers
21 Home
24 Smile
25 Humdinger
26 WWI field famous for poppies
30 Math course
31 Actress Massey
32 "Boy, am I stupid!"
33 Badmouths
35 Tower city
36 Sly
37 Caulking material
38 Eyelike spots
41 Crazed
42 Ashen
43 Peripheral-vision thwarters
48 Cold War abbr.
49 Allow
50 Welsh veggie
51 Cows and sows
52 Dine
53 Jealousy

DOWN
1 Matterhorn, e.g.
2 Chum
3 Ostrich's cousin
4 Citizen Kane's estate
5 State with certainty
6 Not vert.
7 Losers
8 Nasty
9 Nevada city
10 Any time now
11 Picnic invaders
16 Conk out
20 1492 craft
21 "Sad to say ..."
22 Matador's foe
23 Gymnast Korbut
24 Splendor
26 Not stiff
27 Tend texts
28 Oxidize
29 Horse-drawn carriage
31 Pedestal occupant
34 Pro QBs, e.g.
35 Small pool
37 Skillet
38 Piece of work
39 Money
40 Otherwise
41 Catcher's glove
44 Meadow
45 Still, in verse
46 Gun the engine
47 Firmament

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	S	H		V	A	M	P	S		M	O	P
I	K	E		A	B	O	U	T		E	M	U
M	I	S	F	R	A	B	I	F		D	F	N
			L	I	N		S	P	L	I	N	T
B	U	M	M	E	D		E	P	I	C		
E	R	A		D	O	G		E	R	A	S	E
T	A	L	C		N	I	P		A	B	E	D
A	L	L	O	T		N	E	B		L	E	I
		E	Z	R	A		A	L	B	E	R	T
P	L	A	Y	E	R		C	A	R			
L	O	B		M	E	M	O	R	A	B	L	E
F	I	I		O	N	I	C	F		I	F	O
A	L	E		R	A	N	K	S		I	E	N

Yesterday's answer 1-24



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18– only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mischa Barton, 26; Tatyana Ali, 33; Ed Helms, 38; Neil Diamond, 71.

Happy Birthday: Good fortune can be yours if you are selective in your pursuits and investments. Do your due diligence and find out the pros and cons of anything you want to incorporate into your life. Opportunity is heading your way, and the chance to improve your living quarters and arrangements will come into play. Your numbers are 8, 17, 20, 27, 35, 38, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): A disciplined approach to what needs to be done will enhance your reputation. The people who gravitate toward you will have something to contribute that will help you reach your goals. Push hard and success will come your way. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Not everyone will be honest with you, but if you listen carefully, you will be able to weed out who is on your side and who isn't. Remain moderate in all that you do or say and you will come out on top. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Put greater enthusiasm into whatever you do and you will draw attention. Your ability to utilize your imaginative originality, as well as your ability to bring logic and reason to whatever you do, will be most impressive today. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Put love first and don't allow uncertainty to creep in, causing insecurity and doubt about what you have worked so hard to achieve. Self-doubt will be your enemy, so muster up a little bravado and you will run the show. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You are on a roll and nobody can stop you. Your ideas are unique and workable, and your ability to make a profit will push you to the head of your class. Enjoy your good fortune, but don't go overboard or all will be lost. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Emotional deception can cause problems when dealing with colleagues, peers and institutional matters. Keep things simple, and refuse to let anyone lead you down the wrong path. Call the shots and avoid questionable people. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Interacting with other creative people will bring interesting results. Diversity is essential, and the more you bring to the table the more valuable you will become. Don't let a personal matter slow your professional progress. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Not everyone will understand what you are trying to accomplish. Stick to the people who get what you are doing and you will receive input that will allow you to finish what you start so that you can receive the benefits. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Taking a trip, whether it's a short or long distance, will result in rejuvenation and a better view of what you want to do in the future. Now is the time to contemplate so you can move forward with clarity. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Money matters may have to be handled in an unorthodox manner. Separate your personal and professional goals to see your assets and liabilities clearly. A change at home will help you ease any stress you've been feeling. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Emotions will be difficult to hide. You can help eliminate your problems if you share your concerns with a partner, close friend or confidant. Open up and you will find a way to turn any negative you face into a positive. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Give help and get it in return. The guidelines you set up now will help you accomplish your goals. Keeping things equal will be the factor that will allow you to continue to work in partnership with others. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are original and trendy. You set goals and aspire to them.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	1			9	4			
2						7		
			2		6		3	
		6		5		3		4
5			9		7			2
8		7		4		6		
	6		5		1			
		2						8
			6	3			2	

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	7	1	8	6	2	9	4	3
3	4	6	5	9	1	7	8	2
2	8	9	3	7	4	1	5	6
1	2	7	6	5	8	4	3	9
4	6	5	1	3	9	2	7	8
8	9	3	2	4	7	5	6	1
7	3	8	9	2	5	6	1	4
9	1	4	7	8	6	3	2	5
6	5	2	4	1	3	8	9	7

Difficulty Level ★ 1/23

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DOWN ALABAMA WAY **Solution: 8 letters**

K	S	S	N	O	I	S	N	A	M	S	F	M	L	T
A	C	A	M	P	N	O	S	A	T	A	O	L	R	R
O	R	O	I	E	M	M	F	R	H	N	I	A	G	U
M	E	M	D	L	O	A	O	A	T	T	E	N	E	T
N	A	R	A	S	L	N	H	G	E	H	O	D	N	A
K	A	D	S	G	G	E	O	G	O	L	T	D	E	C
G	R	O	I	H	N	M	M	O	N	N	G	L	V	E
S	L	O	O	S	E	O	V	A	A	I	L	N	A	D
B	T	L	W	R	O	E	L	V	C	I	M	C	O	B
E	D	A	Y	L	R	N	I	I	V	R	O	R	S	L
A	U	K	T	I	L	D	T	S	A	T	B	W	I	U
C	N	E	V	E	R	I	T	W	T	S	I	O	N	B
H	E	E	M	U	E	N	R	O	O	M	L	C	A	S
E	R	O	T	S	U	E	N	G	T	R	E	E	S	T
S	H	S	U	H	T	A	R	G	N	I	L	L	E	B

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Beaches, Bellingrath, Birmingham, Blossoms, Boat, Bulb, Camellias, Camp, Cities, Cotton, Decatur, Dock, Dothan, Dune, Gardens, Geneva, Grillwork, Heart, Home, Hoover, Huntsville, Hush, Lake, Land, Longleaf, Madison, Magnolias, Main, Mansions, Mobile, Montgomery, Oak, Owns, Rivers, Room, State, Stronghold, Sturdivant, Swim, Trees, Warm

Yesterday's Answer: Education

CLASSIFIED ADS

WHATZIT Solution: A thick ear

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

WANTED TO BUY

Looking for used cars. Year 2003 & up. 4 cylinder, Good condition. We pay cash! Pls. call 287-7676

EMPLOYMENT

(2) Diesel Mechanic
$6.00-$7.00/hr Contact
Cristy at tel# 989-6192

WANTED

(1) Barber and (1) Beautician
with 2 year experience, pleasing personality
With good moral character.

Interested applicants may call or submit resume to Genoveva's Hair Power, Inc.
Tel. 234-6378 or 234-9226.

WORLD RESORT

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPEN DATE: January 19, 2012
CLOSE DATE: January 27, 2012
POSITION: Accountant
SALARY: $5.05~$6.00/per hour

Qualifications: High School graduate or equivalent. Minimum two years experience in accounting required. Formal education/training in accounting highly recommended.

OPEN DATE: January 19, 2012
CLOSE DATE: January 27, 2012
POSITION: Guest Relation Officer
SALARY: $5.05~$6.00/per hour

Qualifications: High School graduate or equivalent required. Experience in a hotel front desk and/or concierge position strongly preferred. Proficiency in Chinese and Korean language is highly preferred. Will also consider Japanese and Russian speakers. Must have excellent people skills, willingness to provide service, friendly attitude and a ready smile.

OPEN DATE: January 19, 2012
CLOSE DATE: January 27, 2012
POSITION: Steward
SALARY: $5.05/per hour

Qualifications: High School graduate or equivalent. The position may require employee to receive certain food handler related health examinations and clearances before hire and continue to receive such examinations and clearances as a condition to their continue employment. Minimum two (2) years experience in food service preferred.

OPEN DATE: January 19, 2012
CLOSE DATE: January 27, 2012
POSITION: Prim/Lifeguard
SALARY: $5.05/per hour

Qualifications: High School graduate or equivalent. First-aid and Lifeguard certifications preferred, but not required. Sports, recreation, and hospitality industry experience also a plus.

For more information, please contact Ms. Miriam K. Seman, Human Resources Manager at (670) 234-5900 ext. 274/266.

Employment application forms are available at the Saipan World Resort, Security Office, located next to the Wave Jungle Water Park. Applicants must submit the completed form and all the necessary requirements to the Security Office. Incomplete application will not be received by the Security Office.

One (1) Assistant Soils/Materials Technicians

Qualifications: Associate's degree in Engineering Technology (may be foreign and/or educational equivalent) or six (6) months experience as a Soils/Materials Technician or Assistant Soils/Materials Technician.
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Patriots in Super Bowl, beat Ravens, 23-20

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Tom Brady got all the help he needed to get the New England Patriots into the Super Bowl.

Thank you, Billy Cundiff.

The Baltimore Ravens kicker shanked a 32-yard field goal with 11 seconds left and the Patriots escaped with a 23-20 victory in the AFC championship game on Sunday.

Usually, vintage Brady doesn't need much assistance in championship settings, but the Patriots much-maligned defense came through, and Brady's 1-yard touchdown dive with 11:29 left proved to be the winning points.

"Well, I sucked pretty bad today, but our defense saved us," Brady said after throwing for 239 yards, with two interceptions and, for the first time in 36 games, no TD passes. "I'm going to try to go out and do a better job in a couple of weeks, but I'm proud of this team, my teammates."

Brady waited out the final tense minutes on the sideline, and then celebrated with the rest of his team when Cundiff's attempt went wide left. The Ravens looked on in stunned horror.

Cundiff had no excuse.

"It's a kick I've kicked probably a thousand times in my career," Cundiff said. "I went out there and didn't convert. That's the way things go."

Next up as the Patriots chase their fourth Super Bowl trophy in Brady and coach Bill Belichick's tenure in New England is the New York Giants, who beat the San Francisco 49ers 20-17 in overtime Sunday night.

The Patriots were installed as 3-point favorites for the Super Bowl on Feb. 5 in Indianapolis.

In their last trip to the big game, the Patriots had an 18-0 record when they were stunned by the Giants four years ago. They won the NFL championship for the 2001, 2003 and 2004 seasons. This time, they head to the Super Bowl with a 10-game winning streak.

Before Cundiff missed, the Ravens had a chance to go ahead two plays earlier, but wide receiver Lee Evans was stripped of the ball in the end zone by backup cornerback Sterling Moore, who earlier was victimized for a touchdown that gave Baltimore (13-5) the lead 17-16.

On his touchdown, Brady took a huge hit from Ravens star linebacker Ray Lewis, then emphatically spiked the ball as he walked away. Earlier, Brady showed his fire by barking at Lewis following a hard tackle on a 4-yard run.

"It's a pretty mentally tough team," said Brady, whose fifth trip to the Super Bowl will equal John Elway's achievement with Denver. "There's really some resiliency. We've shown that all season. Even in the games we've lost, the three games we lost, we fought until the end. We're always going to fight to the end. It's great to be a part of a team like this."

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) dives over the middle to score on a one-yard run against the Baltimore Ravens during the second half of the AFC Championship NFL football game Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012, in Foxborough, Mass.

AP

Baltimore had the touted defense in this matchup, but New England's unit, ranked 31st overall, was just as powerful.

"We stepped up," Pro Bowl nose tackle Vince Wilfork said. "We all stepped up big time. Being in this situation is a great moment. You have to cherish this moment."

The Patriots shut down Ray Rice, the league's total yardage leader, who was limited to 78 yards. Brandon Spikes made a fourth-quarter interception of Joe Flacco, who played well before that and threw for two touchdowns. And when the Ravens were threatening to score a late touchdown to win their first conference title in 11 years, New England clamped down.

"It's two great football teams, two gladiators, I guess, just kind of going at each other at the end, and I'm proud of our guys," Harbaugh said. "You know, we've got 53 guys, mighty men, as we like to call them—and they fought, and we came up a little bit short, as 53. You know, 53 win and 53 lose."

With Rice a nonfactor, Baltimore had to rely on Flacco, and he delivered one of his best performances. Flacco has led the Ravens into the playoffs in all four of his pro seasons, but not to the Super Bowl. He was 22 for 36 for 306 yards and touchdowns of 6 yards to Dennis Pitta and 29 to rookie Torrey Smith.

The loss hardly could be blamed on Flacco.

"I don't know if I ever will prove anything," he said. "I just play the same way. We lost; someone has to. But we laid it all out on the field."

Operating against a porous secondary missing its top cornerback, Kyle Arrington, who left in the second quarter with an eye injury, Flacco gave Baltimore its first lead. His short pass on third down to explosive receiver Smith turned into a 29-yard scamper down the right sideline after Moore completely whiffed on the tackle.

Danny Woodhead's fumble on the ensuing kickoff set up Baltimore at the Patriots 28, but a third-down sack forced Cundiff to kick a 39-yard field goal, making it 20-16.

New England didn't flinch.

Brady took the Patriots 63 yards in 11 plays, and seemed to score on a 1-yard run. The call was overruled by replay, though, and on fourth-down, he dived just high enough over the line for the winning points.

Giants top 49ers in OT to reach Super Bowl

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The New York Giants have their own Super Bowl formula: in overtime and on the road.

And with Lawrence Tynes' foot.

Five plays after the 49ers' Kyle Williams fumbled a punt, Tynes kicked a game-winning 31-yard field goal in overtime, sending the Giants to the Super Bowl with a 20-17 victory over San Francisco in the NFC championship game on Sunday.

In another tight one in this decades-old postseason rivalry, both defenses made key stops before New York capitalized on a rare mistake in San Francisco's resurgent season. Williams' blunder put the Giants in perfect position for another sensational finish in a season full of them.

"That was a tough game. We had to fight for every yard that we got," Giants quarterback Eli Manning said. "Defense was outstanding, special teams getting us two turnovers was huge. That led to 10 points."

The first three overtime series ended in punts before Williams fumbled. The Giants won it moments later and silenced—for good this time—the towel-waving, poncho-wearing sellout crowd at cold, rainy Candlestick Park.

"It was one of those situations where I tried to turn it upfield and it just didn't work out," Williams said.

Manning and the Giants (12-7) will face the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl on Feb. 5 in Indianapolis as 3 1/2-point underdogs. The last time the teams met for the NFL title, 2008, the Giants ended the Patriots' bid for a perfect season.

Tynes had a hand, er, foot in getting the Giants to that one, too, kicking the game-winning field goal in overtime at Green Bay.

Devin Thomas put the Giants in position by recovering his second fumble of the game after Jacquian Williams stripped the ball from fill-in return man Kyle Williams, who also fumbled earlier to set up a New York touchdown.

"It's my second NFC championship game, my second game-winner," Tynes said of his kick 7:54 into overtime. "It's amazing. I had dreams about this last night. It was from 42, not 31, but I was so nervous today before the game just anticipating this kind of game. I'm usually pretty cool, but there was something about tonight where I knew I was going to have to make a kick. Hats off to Eli, offense, defense. Great win."

Manning went 32 of 58 for 316 yards and two touchdowns and overcame six sacks in his record fifth road playoff win, New York's fifth in a row overall.

Manning threw a go-ahead 17-yard touchdown pass to Mario Manningham with 8:34 remaining after Kyle Williams fumbled for the first time.

The Giants challenged that the ball touched Williams' right knee and Thomas recovered with 11:06 left and coach Tom Coughlin won, giving the Giants the ball back at the 29.

"That was a tremendous football game for those that really enjoy football at it's very basic element," said Coughlin, who matched former Cowboys coach Tom Landry for most road playoff wins with seven. "Just a classic football game that just seemed like no one was going to put themselves into position to win it. Fortunately we were able to do that."

A 12-point underdog in the 2008 title game, the Giants battered Brady and got a last-minute TD pass from Manning to Plaxico Burress to win their third Super Bowl. Five months ago, Manning declared he was in the same class as Tom Brady. Now, he'll get another chance to outdo him on the NFL's biggest stage.

During this playoff run, he's already outplayed Aaron Rodgers and the defending champion Packers, and fellow former No. 1 pick Alex Smith.

Victor Cruz set the tone Sunday with eight of his 10 receptions in the first half and finished with 142 yards.

"It's just been a tremendous effort by all of us, man," Cruz said. "We understand that any one of us can get hot at any moment. As long as we're all on the same page and just playing together, man, we've got a great group of guys."

Vernon Davis caught touchdown passes of 73 and 28 yards and wound up with three catches for 112 yards for the NFC West champions (14-4), who went from 6-10 a year ago to a contender and ended an eight-year playoff drought.

"It will be a tough one. It will take a while to get over," Harbaugh said.

The only other time these two franchises faced off in the conference championship the game finished in memorable fashion. On Jan. 20, 1991, Roger Craig fumbled with the 49ers leading 13-12 late in the fourth quarter and the Giants went on to win 15-13 to deny San Francisco a chance at a third straight Super Bowl title. New York then beat the Bills to capture its second Super Bowl.

These teams met six times in the playoffs between the 1981 and `94 seasons with the winner going on to win the Super Bowl four times.

Smith went 12 for 26 for 196 yards and two touchdowns and was sacked three times. San Francisco converted only one third down, coming on the final play of regulation as the offense was unable to overcome Williams' blunders.

"We all know him. We know how committed he is to winning," Smith said. "It's not on him. I look at the 1-for-13 on third downs. I know he's going to feel bad, but he's still part of our team. We didn't lose the game there. We lost it across the board offensively. We just couldn't get it done."

Fired Penn State coach Joe Paterno dead at 85

STATE COLLEGE, Pennsylvania (AP)—Joe Paterno, the longtime Penn State coach who won more American football games than anyone in major college history but was fired amid a child sex abuse scandal that scarred his reputation for winning with integrity, died Sunday. He was 85.

His family released a statement Sunday morning to announce his death: "His loss leaves a void in our lives that will never be filled."

"He died as he lived," the statement said. "He fought hard until the end, stayed positive, thought only of others and constantly reminded everyone of how blessed his life had been. His ambitions were far reaching, but he never believed he had to leave this Happy Valley to achieve them. He was a man devoted to his family, his university, his players and his community."

Two police officers were stationed to block traffic on the street where Paterno's modest ranch home stands next to a local park. The officers said the family had asked there be no public gathering outside the house, still decorated with a Christmas wreath, so Paterno's relatives could grieve privately. And, indeed, the street was quiet on a cold winter day.

Paterno's sons, Scott and Jay, arrived separately at the house late Sunday morning. Jay Paterno, who served as his father's quarterbacks coach, was crying.

Paterno built his program on the credo "Success with Honor," and he found both. The man known as "JoePa" won 409 games and took the Nittany Lions to 37 bowl games and two national championships. More than 250 of the players he coached went on to the NFL.

"He will go down as the greatest football coach in the history of the game," Ohio State coach Urban Meyer said after his former team, the Florida Gators, beat Penn State 37-24 in the 2011 Outback Bowl.

Paterno's son Scott said on Nov. 18 that his father was being treated for lung cancer. The cancer was diagnosed during a follow-up visit for a bronchial illness. A few weeks after that revelation, Paterno also broke his pelvis after a fall but did not need surgery.

Paterno had been in the hospital since Jan. 13 for observation for what his family had called minor complications from his cancer treatments. Not long before that, he conducted his only interview since losing his job, with *The Washington Post*. Paterno was described as frail then, speaking mostly in a whisper and wearing a wig. The second half of the two-day interview was conducted at his bedside.

"As the last 61 years have shown, Joe made an incredible impact," said the statement from the family. "That impact has been felt and appreciated by our family in the form of thousands of letters and well wishes along with countless acts of kindness from people whose lives he touched. It is evident also in the thousands of successful student athletes who have gone on to multiply that impact as they spread out across the country."

The final days of Paterno's Penn State career were easily the toughest in his 61 years with the university and 46 seasons as head football coach.

It was because Paterno was a such a sainted figure—more memorable than any of his players and one of the best-known coaches in all of sports—that his downfall was so startling. During one breathtaking week in early November, Paterno was engulfed by a scandal and forced from his job, because he failed to go to the police in 2002 when told a young boy was molested inside the football complex.

"I didn't know which way to go ... and rather than get in there and make a mistake," he said in the *Post* interview.

Jerry Sandusky, the former defensive coordinator expected to succeed Paterno before retiring in 1999, was charged with sexually assaulting 10 boys over 15 years. Two university officials stepped down after they were charged with perjury following a grand jury investigation of Sandusky. But attention quickly focused on an alleged rape that took place in a shower in the football building, witnessed by Mike McQueary, a graduate assistant at the time.

AP

In this Oct. 17, 2009 file photo, Penn State coach Joe Paterno smiles as he walks the field before an NCAA college football game against Minnesota in State College, Pa.

McQueary testified that he had seen Sandusky attacking the child and that he had told Paterno, who waited a day before alerting school authorities. Police were never called and the state's top cop later said Paterno failed to execute his moral responsibility by not contacting police.

"You know, (McQueary) didn't want to get specific," Paterno said in the *Post* interview. "And to be frank with you I don't know that it would have done any good, because I never heard of, of, rape and a man. So I just did what I thought was best. I talked to people that I thought would be, if there was a problem, that would be following up on it."

On the morning of Nov. 9, Paterno said he would retire following the 2011 season. He also said he was "absolutely devastated" by the abuse case.

"This is a tragedy," the coach said. "It is one of the great sorrows of my life. With the benefit of hindsight, I wish I had done more."

But the university trustees faced a crisis, and in an emergency meeting that night, they fired Paterno, effective immediately. Graham Spanier, one of the longest-serving university presidents in the nation, also was dismissed.

According to Lanny Davis, an attorney retained by the trustees as an adviser, board vice chairman John Surma regretted having to tell Paterno the decision over the phone.

The university handed the football team to one of Paterno's assistants, Tom Bradley, who said Paterno "will go down in history as one of the greatest men, who maybe most of you know as a great football coach."

Thick, smoky-lens glasses, rolled up khakis, jet-black sneakers, blue windbreaker—Paterno was easy to spot on the sidelines. His teams were just as easy to spot on the field; their white helmets and classic blue and white uniforms had the same old-school look as the coach.

Paterno believed success was not measured entirely on the field. From his idealistic early days, he had implemented what he called a "grand experiment"—to graduate more players while maintaining success on the field.

He was a frequent speaker on ethics in sports, a conscience for a world often infiltrated by scandal and shady characters.

His teams consistently ranked among the best in the Big Ten for graduating players. As of 2011, it had 49 academic All-Americans, the third-highest among schools in the Football Bowl Subdivision. All but two played under Paterno.

"He teaches us about really just growing up and being a man," former linebacker Paul Posluszny, now with the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, once said. "Besides the football, he's preparing us to be good men in life."

Paterno certainly had detractors, as well. One former Penn State professor called his high-minded words on academics a farce. He was criticized for making broad critiques about the wrongs in college football without providing specifics. A former administrator said his players often got special treatment compared to non-athletes. His coaching style often was considered too conservative. Some thought he held on to his job too long. There was a push to move him out in 2004 but it failed.

But the critics were in the minority, and his program was never cited for major NCAA violations. However, the child sexual abuse scandal prompted separate investigations by the U.S. Department of Education and the NCAA into the school's handling.

Paterno played quarterback and cornerback for Brown University and set a defensive record with 14 career interceptions, a distinction he boasted about to his teams all the way into his 80s. He graduated in 1950 with plans to go to law school. He said his father hoped he would someday be president.

When he was 23, a former coach at Brown was moving to Penn State to become the head coach and persuaded Paterno to come with him as an assistant.

"I had no intention to coach when I got out of Brown," Paterno said in 2007 at Beaver Stadium in an interview before being inducted into the Hall of Fame. "Come to this hick town? From Brooklyn?"

In 1963, he was offered a job by the late Al Davis—$18,000, triple his salary at Penn State, plus a car to become general manager and coach of the AFL's Oakland Raiders. He said no. Rip Engle retired as Penn State head coach three years later, and Paterno took over.

Jennings' 23 help Bucks beat Heat, 91-82

MIAMI (AP)—Brandon Jennings scored 23 points and Ersan Ilyasova added 16 as the Milwaukee Bucks held Miami to 37 percent shooting in a 91-82 victory over the Heat on Sunday.

It was the second straight road win for Milwaukee, which started the season 0-8 away from home. Andrew Bogut scored 13 points for the Bucks, and Shaun Livingston and Stephen Jackson each had 10.

LeBron James finished with 28 points and 13 rebounds for Miami, which had won three straight. Chris Bosh scored 23 points for the Heat.

Milwaukee turned 22 Miami turnovers into 22 points and the Heat tied an NBA season-low with nine assists, one shy of matching the franchise record. It was the first time Miami lost this season in seven games without Dwyane Wade, out again with a sprained right ankle.

Pacers 98, Lakers 96

In Los Angeles, Roy Hibbert scored eight of his 18 points in the fourth quarter playing with a broken nose to help Indiana beat Los Angeles.

Kobe Bryant scored 33 points for the Lakers, but missed what would have been a tying 3-pointer from 30 feet from the top of the key with 3.5 seconds to play.

The Lakers, coming off road losses to Miami and Orlando, failed to reach 100 points for the 11th straight game—their longest streak since a 12-game stretch in 2003-04.

Hibbert, the Pacers' second-leading scorer, left the court with the broken nose after fouling Bryant with 6:46 left in the first quarter. Hibbert reported back in with 5:12 left in the second quarter after a trainer stuffed cotton up his nose, but had difficulty keeping it in at times. He also had eight rebounds.

Celtics 100, Wizards 94

In Washington, Paul Pierce had season highs with 34 points and 10 assists, and equaled his season best with eight rebounds, to lead Boston past Washington.

The Celtics won for the second time in three games despite playing most of the game without a pair of starting guards. Point guard Rajon Rondo was out for the second straight game with a sprained right wrist, and Boston lost starting guard Ray Allen as well when he jammed his left ankle in the first half.

Pierce stepped in and made up for their absence, going 10 for 15 from the floor and 12 of 15 from the line. He also had a season-high three steals.

John Wall had 27 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists for the Wizards.

Clippers 103, Raptors 91

In Los Angeles, Mo Williams scored Los Angeles' first 17 points of the fourth quarter and finished with 26 points as the Clippers sent Toronto to its eighth straight loss.

Blake Griffin had 18 points and nine rebounds, DeAndre Jordan added 16 points and 16 rebounds, and Chauncey Billups had 14 assists for the Clippers, playing their fifth straight game without point guard Chris Paul because of a left hamstring strain.

Leandro Barbosa scored 19 points for the Raptors.

Nets 97, Bobcats 87

In Newark, New Jersey, Deron Williams had 19 points, nine rebounds and 10 assists to lead New Jersey past Charlotte.

MarShon Brooks added 20 points for the Nets, and Anthony Morrow had 19. Rookie Kemba Walker led the Bobcats with 16 points, six rebounds and four assists.

Wilson holds off field to win Humana Challenge

LA QUINTA, Calif. (AP)—Mark Wilson made a 10-foot birdie putt on the final hole to win the Humana Challenge on Sunday, beating Robert Garrigus, John Mallinger and Johnson Wagner by two strokes in a dramatic dusk finish to the wind-delayed tournament.

Moments after Garrigus barely missed a 35-foot eagle putt that would have given him the lead, Wilson coolly made his birdie try in the disappearing light, calmly celebrating his fifth career PGA Tour victory.

"Robert and I, going back and forth, we really enjoyed that," Wilson said. "It just came down to 18, and I didn't want to give him a chance to make that putt to tie me. ... That's what we play for. You want somebody to win it, not necessarily to lose it."

Wilson led by three strokes Sunday morning after finishing his third round, which was delayed by ferocious wind Saturday. Wilson quickly gave away the lead on the low-scoring Palmer Private course, but played bogey-free over the final 15 holes while every other competitor dropped back—including Garrigus, who fell out of the lead when he missed a 5 1/2-foot par putt on the 17th.

Wilson closed with a 3-under 69 to finish at 24 under, taking the $1,008,000 winner's share of the $5.6 million purse despite the growing dark and cold. While most everybody else pulled on sweaters for the final holes, the Wisconsin native stayed in his polo shirt out of superstition and familiarity.

"It's a feel thing," Wilson said. "I've been playing with short sleeves all day. I didn't just want to put it on and get a new feeling, because everything was going well."

After wind gusts topping 35 mph caused damage on all three courses and forced an early end to Saturday's competition, the final round stretched well past sunset in the Coachella Valley.

"We really couldn't see much," Garrigus said. "I could barely pick up the flag on 18. We had a great day, and it got pretty dark. I wish I could have read that putt a little better."

The first three rounds were dominated by low scores, but Jeff Maggert made the biggest move in the final round, moving up to fifth with a bogey-free 64.

Eight players were within two strokes of the lead when the final group neared the turn, but Wilson weathered every challenge with solid shot-making that added to his reputation as a fast starter. Wilson won twice in the first few weeks of last season, and each of his five career victories have come before mid-March.

"The only thing I can think of is the break in November and December," Wilson said. "I clear my mind of golf. I tend to remember the good things I did in the season before, and when I've come out the last two years, I've really had a clear mind focused on what I'm doing."

Wagner, who won the Sony Open last week in Hawaii, birdied two of his final three holes, hitting a 7-foot birdie putt on the 18th to finish at 22 under. Mallinger then pushed a 15-foot birdie putt inches wide on the 18th, barely missing the chance to move into a first-place tie.

The exciting finish in the gathering darkness capped a revitalizing week for the erstwhile Bob Hope Classic, which signed its first title sponsor in four years and partnered with the foundation of former President Bill Clinton, who serves as the tournament's new host.

The revamped pro-am dropped its traditional fifth day of competition and boosted its purse, attracting the best professional field in several years. Attendance also increased sharply, with crowds gathering to watch Phil Mickelson and the celebrity competitors over the first three days—including Clinton, whose round was interrupted by wind Saturday.

Wilson holed a bunker shot on the par-3 12th to reclaim sole possession of the lead at 22 under, pulling one stroke ahead of Mallinger and Garrigus. Mallinger caught up on the 14th with a short birdie putt, and Garrigus joined them moments later in the next group.

Wilson and Garrigus then both holed tough birdie putts on the 16th, but Garrigus' tee shot on the 17th landed on the fringe. He missed his par putt, dropping back to 22 under while Wilson grinded out a par.

Garrigus easily reached the 18th green in two, but his long eagle putt over a rise barely missed the hole, going 9 feet past.

Garrigus, Zach Johnson, Ben Crane and Brandt Snedeker were three strokes behind Wilson after finishing their third rounds early Sunday morning. Garrigus shot a third-round 61, moving into position to contend for his second PGA Tour victory.

AP

Mark Wilson holds up the Hope Trophy after winning the Humana Challenge golf tournament on the Palmer Private course at PGA West in La Quinta, Calif., Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012.

Serena out in 4th round at Aussie Open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Serena Williams' 17-match winning streak at the Australian Open ended Monday in a stunning 6-2, 6-3 loss to Ekaterina Makarova, the lowest-ranked woman in the fourth round.

The dominant force at Melbourne Park this century, Williams had lost only two matches at Melbourne Park since winning the first of her five Australian Open titles in 2003. After losing in the 2008 quarterfinals, she won titles in 2009 and 2010 before sitting out last year because of injury.

But she had seven double faults—four in the fifth game of the second set—and 37 unforced errors to give the 56th-ranked Makarova a spot in the quarterfinals at a major for the first time.

"Uhm, I think she played really well. She went for broke on a lot of her shots," Williams said. "I made 37 errors. That kind of tells the story of the match."

Makarova, who surprised Williams with the power of her ground strokes, will play either 2008 champion Maria Sharapova or Sabine Lisicki.

"I don't know what to say. Amazing feeling and first time in quarterfinals," the 23-year-old Russian left-hander said. "(Williams is) an unbelievable player. It's really tough to play against her so I'm really happy I finished it in my way."

Williams sprained her left ankle in a warmup tournament at Brisbane two weeks ago, but didn't show signs of being seriously restricted Monday.

She was bothered by a bug that landed on her left shoulder when she dropped serve for the first time in the match, and became increasingly exasperated as her misses piled up—including one overhead that she sent way too long and another that she hit meekly back for Makarova to pass her.

Williams won the first two games in the second set but then Makarova went on a roll, winning the next four—including the double-fault strewn game at 2-2 when Williams screamed after one and asked herself out loud after another: "How many double-faults do you want to make?"

Williams didn't blame her ankle injury or the heat, which increased to 93 during the day, but couldn't even describe how bad her serve was.

"Yeah, I served like a ... I guess that's not appropriate. I served, I don't know," she said, struggling for an explanation. "It was disastrous really. My lefty serve is actually better than that. Maybe I should have started serving lefty."

The 13-time Grand Slam winner had only played two competitive matches since losing the U.S. Open final to Sam Stosur last September, and her light preparation was curtailed further when she badly twisted her ankle as she won her second-round match at Brisbane earlier this month.

"I'm feeling fine. Obviously I'm not 100 percent, and I haven't been," she said. "But it's no excuse or anything.

"Usually I play myself into the tournament, but I don't have a huge problem with an injury—so this is a completely different situation. Usually it's easier for me to play myself in because I'm usually physically OK."

Makarova got tighter toward the end but kept her nerve to hold in a key game. Then, with Williams serving to stay in the match, she needed four match points before Williams sent a backhand wide.

The absence of Williams opens up the women's draw, with Sharapova, defending champion Kim Clijsters and Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova the only major winners still in contention. Clijsters advanced to the quarterfinals with a comeback win over Li Na on Sunday in a rematch of the 2011 decider, while Kvitova had some trouble late before beating former top-ranked Ana Ivanovic 6-2, 7-6 (2) in the opening match Monday.

The 21-year-old Kvitova was seemingly fast-tracking her progress to the last eight until her game momentarily came undone near the end of the second set after she completely missed a routine overhead at the net to allow the former French Open champion to pull to 4-5.

She lost the next eight points to fall behind 6-5—badly missing on a couple of wild groundstrokes—and only managed to force a tiebreaker with two big serves out wide in the 12th game.

Ivanovic's two double-faults early in the tiebreaker gave Kvitova some easy points and took the pressure off.

The match seemed close to ending much earlier when Kvitova got into perfect position to put away an innocuous lob from Ivanovic, but played through the shot too quickly and was hit instead on the body.

"It was a very tough match at the end. I mean it was a really easy point then I thought I got it and I lost eight points in a row," she said. "I'm very happy I played very well in the tiebreak."

She'll face Sara Errani of Italy, who beat 2008 semifinalist Zheng Jie 6-2, 6-1.

On the men's side, two-time Australian Open runner-up Andy Murray only spent 49 minutes on court and was leading 6-1, 6-1, 1-0 when Mikhail Kukushkin retired from their fourth-round match with a left hip injury, giving him an easy path into the quarterfinals.

"It's obviously good for me, I get to conserve some energy," Murray said. "Tough for him, first time in the fourth-round of a Slam."

He'll play Kei Nishikori, who had a stunning 2-6, 6-2, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 win over sixth-seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, the 2008 finalist.

The 22-year-old Nishikori became the first Japanese man to advance to the Australian Open quarterfinals in 80 years, and the only the second man from his country to reach a Grand Slam quarterfinal in the Open Era started in 1968. Shuzo Matsuoka reached the 1995 Wimbledon quarterfinals.

Defending champion Novak Djokovic was playing Lleyton Hewitt on Monday night.

On Sunday, Clijsters set up a quarterfinal against top-ranked Caroline Wozniacki, who had a 6-0, 7-5 win over former No. 1 Jelena Jankovic. Wozniacki is yet to win a major, but her confidence is high.

"If I play like I did today, Kim will have to really play well to beat me," she said.

Clijsters needed pain killers to get through the 2-hour, 23-minute win over Li and she's hoping ice treatment will help her recover in time for the quarterfinals.

Third-seeded Victoria Azarenka advanced with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Iveta Benesova. She next plays eighth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska.

Roger Federer more or less held a clinic at Rod Laver Arena, where he has won four of his 16 Grand Slam titles, on Sunday night—a 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Bernard Tomic that moved him into the quarterfinals for a 31st consecutive major.

Federer's quarterfinal will be his 1,000th tour-level match. He plays 2009 U.S. Open champion Juan Martin del Potro, whom he once expected to rise to No. 1.

Rafael Nadal advanced with a convincing win over fellow Spaniard Feliciano Lopez. The 2009 champion's right knee was heavily wrapped and his left ankle needed to be taped after three games of the first set. Afterward, he said he was fine.

He will play Tomas Berdych, hoping to avoid a third consecutive quarterfinal loss in Melbourne.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	11	5	.688	–
Boston	6	9	.400	4 1/2
New York	6	10	.375	5
New Jersey	5	12	.294	6 1/2
Toronto	4	13	.235	7 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	11	4	.733	–
Atlanta	12	5	.706	–
Miami	11	5	.688	1/2
Charlotte	3	14	.176	9
Washington	2	14	.125	9 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	15	3	.833	–
Indiana	11	4	.733	2 1/2
Milwaukee	6	9	.400	7 1/2
Cleveland	6	9	.400	7 1/2
Detroit	4	13	.235	10 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Memphis	9	6	.600	–
San Antonio	10	7	.588	–
Dallas	10	7	.588	–
Houston	9	7	.563	1/2
New Orleans	3	13	.188	6 1/2

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	13	3	.813	–
Denver	12	5	.706	1 1/2
Utah	10	5	.667	2 1/2
Portland	9	7	.563	4
Minnesota	7	9	.438	6

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	9	5	.643	–
L.A. Lakers	10	8	.556	1
Phoenix	6	9	.400	3 1/2
Sacramento	6	11	.353	4 1/2
Golden State	5	10	.333	4 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Boston 100, Washington 94
L.A. Clippers 103, Toronto 91
New Jersey 97, Charlotte 87
Milwaukee 91, Miami 82
Indiana 98, L.A. Lakers 96

HUMANA CHALLENGE SCORES

LA QUINTA, California (AP)—Scores Sunday from the Humana Challenge, a $5.6 million US PGA Tour course on three courses: 6,950-yard, par-72 p-PGA West (Palmer Course); 7,060-yard, par-72 q-La Quinta Club; 6,924-yard, par-72 n-PGA West (Nicklaus Course):

FINAL ROUND

Mark Wilson (500), $1,008,000	66n-62p-67q-69–264
Johnson Wagner (208), $418,133	68p-67q-66n-65–266
John Mallinger (208), $418,133	67q-65n-68p-66–266
Robert Garrigus (208), $418,133	73p-64q-61n-68–266
Jeff Maggert (110), $224,000	69p-65q-69n-64–267
John Senden (95), $194,600	69q-64n-68p-67–268
David Toms (95), $194,600	63q-65n-72p-68–268
Bobby Gates (78), $156,800	68p-63q-71n-67–269
Ben Crane (78), $156,800	65n-63p-70q-71–269
Brandt Snedeker (78), $156,800	64n-68p-66q-71–269
Zach Johnson (78), $156,800	68p-65q-65n-71–269
Brendon de Jonge (63), $123,200	65q-71n-70p-64–270
Jason Dufner (63), $123,200	71p-63q-68n-68–270
Gary Christian (55), $95,200	66n-68p-73q-64–271
Sang-Moon Bae (55), $95,200	64n-69p-72q-66–271
Pat Perez (55), $95,200	67q-67n-74p-63–271
Rory Sabbatini (55), $95,200	68p-68q-68n-67–271
Martin Laird (55), $95,200	66p-69q-67n-69–271
Harris English (51), $72,800	69q-62n-73p-68–272
Camilo Villegas (51), $72,800	63n-68p-72q-69–272
Steve Marino (51), $72,800	65q-68n-68p-71–272
Josh Teater (48), $56,000	71q-66n-67p-69–273
Bob Estes (48), $56,000	64n-70p-71q-68–273
Matt Kuchar (48), $56,000	71p-67q-70n-65–273
Stephen Ames (48), $56,000	66n-67p-70q-70–273
James Driscoll (44), $42,280	69q-70n-68p-67–274
Paul Goydos (44), $42,280	70q-69n-69p-66–274
Jarrod Lyle (44), $42,280	68p-67q-67n-72–274
Brendon Todd (44), $42,280	66p-67q-69n-72–274
Kevin Na (37), $31,858	66n-68p-73q-68–275
William McGirt (37), $31,858	67n-71p-68q-69–275
Kevin Chappell (37), $31,858	65q-68n-72p-70–275
Miguel Angel Carballo (37), $31,858	69q-66n-70p-70–275
Brett Quigley (37), $31,858	67p-68q-70n-70–275
Bud Cauley (37), $31,858	66q-67n-71p-71–275
Chris DiMarco (37), $31,858	68q-64n-72p-71–275
Cameron Tringale (37), $31,858	68n-64p-71q-72–275
Jason Bohn (37), $31,858	68p-70q-71n-66–275
Lee Janzen (31), $24,080	69n-66p-72q-69–276
Ken Duke (31), $24,080	67n-65p-74q-70–276
Chez Reavie (31), $24,080	70q-70n-70p-66–276
Chris Kirk (26), $18,512	68q-63n-74p-72–277
Kyle Reifers (26), $18,512	69p-69q-67n-72–277
Roberto Castro (26), $18,512	68n-70p-70q-69–277
Carl Pettersson (26), $18,512	71q-70n-67p-69–277
Erik Compton (26), $18,512	67n-69p-72q-69–277

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SBA finale roll-off winners feted

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Gloria Omechelang had her hands full during the awards ceremony for the 2011 Budweiser King and Queen/Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes last Sunday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

Omechelang received the 2011 Queen of the Lanes trophy and also took home prizes for topping the Bowling Ranking System and playing the most tournaments for the season. The veteran female kegler ruled the season-ending roll-off after prevailing against Yho Villavicencio and Carol McKenzie in the stepladder finals and pocketed $300. She then won an overnight stay for two with breakfast gift certificate for earning 745 BRS points and a Budweiser beach chair for competing in all of the 12 monthly roll-offs Saipan Bowling Association had in 2011. Gloria shared the same perfect attendance record with husband Percy, while Raymond Zapanta reigned supreme in the men's BRS with his 700 points.

Cash prizes and trophies were also handed out to Villavicencio and McKenzie, who got $150 and $100, while Mel Regis gained $70 and Lala Taitano went home with $40 for rounding out the Top 5. Gift certificates were awarded to Ron Cal, Diane Chong, Gigi Zapanta, Tess Fabie, and Myrna Santos for placing sixth to 10th in the 2011 finale roll-off held on Jan. 8.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, John Taisacan, Gloria Omechelang, and Simon Manacop show the trophies they received during the awards ceremony for the 2011 Budweiser King and Queen/ Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes last Sunday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

In the King of the Lanes tournament, champion Simon Manacop was $700 richer and also received a trophy, while runners-up Ruselle and Raymond Zapanta took $350 and $200, respectively. Fourth placer Robert Talavera, fifth placer Alex Castro, and sixth placer Efren Cacdac were also awarded cash prizes, while gift certificates were given to Percy Omechelang, Raphael Zapanta, Paul Pangelinan, Ronald Batac, Jerry Kaneshi, and Tony Yarobwemal, who also joined the finale roll-off on Jan. 15.

For the Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes, John Taisacan, who upset favored Marion McKenzie and M.J. Aldan, took home $180 cash, a trophy, one box of Fiji Water, and a gift certificate. Marion McKenzie and Aldan settled for trophies and $90 and $50, respectively, while Marcel McKenzie and Ryan Batac were given lunch give certificates. Aldan won an extra prize—a beach chair—for competing in all 12 roll-offs for youth bowlers.

SBA official Ross Zapanta led the announcement of awardees, while SBA president Jerry Tan handed out the prizes to the winners. After the presentation, Tan encouraged SBA members to keep competing despite the economic struggles the CNMI is currently facing.

THEA

From Page 28

ensure Minor 10 Junior ITF points and will make her the first female player from the CNMI to earn ranking points. The Sunsmart tournament is a Grade 4 event under the Junior ITF Circuit, giving 40 ranking points to the champion, 30 to runner-up, 20 to semifinalists, 15 to quarterfinalists, and 10 to losers in the Round of 16.

Joining Minor in the second round were fellow Oceania ITF Touring Team members Annie Shannon and Tarani Kamoe of Fiji, Assya Trimari and Yaelle Honakoko of New Caledonia, and Marcia Tere-Apisah of Papua New Guinea. Shannon, Kamoe, and Tere-Apisah automatically marched into the second round as they were seeded No. 13, No. 9, and No. 2 and earned byes in the first round, while the two New Caledonia netters won their first round matches. Trimari topped New Zealand's Courtney O'Callaghan, 6-3, 6-3, while Honakoko nailed similar 6-3, 6-3 victory over the host's Michal Matson.

In the second round, Trimari is pitted against Kamoe, while Honakoko duels 11th seed Rheeya Doshi of Singapore. Other second round pairings include Shannon versus unranked Jessica Shaw of New Zealand and Tere-Apisah against another unseeded New Zealand player, Trixie Croad.

After the tournament in Ashburton, Minor and company have two more Junior ITF events left. She will participate in the New Zealand U18 ITF Summer Champs in Auckland from Jan. 29 to Feb. 8 and the Tennis Central U18 Junior ITF Tournament in Wellington from Feb. 7 to 11.

TSUNAMI

From Page 28

10 age group and notched her second record in the division after clocking in at 11:49.95 in the 800m freestyle swim. Her time surpassed the over 10-year mark of SSC's Amanda Johnson (12:22.78/April 28, 2011).

Tammy first made it to the CNMI swim record books last month when she timed in at 5:43.69 in the 400m freestyle, erasing the 5:47.72 Johnson submitted on April 26, 2002.

In the boys 11 to 12, Kaito Yanai reset his own record, tallying 2:51.79 in the 200m breaststroke, more than two seconds faster than his previous mark of 2:54.04 (Feb. 5, 2011). The 12-year-old swimmer has two records in his age group with the other one coming from the 100m breaststroke (1:19.26/Dec. 3, 2011).

Kimura, who climbed up to a new age group late last month, competing in the boys 15 to 16 division, completed the 800m freestyle in 9:12.98, chopping off about four seconds from the time of former record holder and teammate Kai Staal (9:16.36/April 10, 2010). The 15-year-old Kimura now has two marks in his age group with the first one recorded just last month (Dec. 3) when he clocked in at 2:20.05 in the 200m backstroke event of the Tsunami Swim Circuit Series 3.

Meanwhile, Tsunami Saipan head coach Hiro Kimura acknowledged participants of the last weekend's meet.

"Great job, everyone. I'm so proud of you all. There were a lot of great swims," the Tsunami Saipan coach said.

The older Kimura expects more records to fall, as the club will host two more small meets. The second part of the series will be held on Feb. 18, while the last one is scheduled for April 28.

MAYWEATHER

From Page 28

world's top pound-for-pound fighters, nearly made a deal for a fight once before but the American's insistence on unique antidoping blood tests helped kill the talks.

This time, Mayweather has a May 5 date booked at a Las Vegas arena while Pacquiao's promoter wants a late May date to assemble a huge outdoor arena so tickets can be sold to boost profits by as much as $50 million.

"Floyd wants to fight Manny Pacquiao on May 5 and he went as far as to reach out to Manny Pacquiao personally," Ellerbe said.

'Step Up, Punk'

Ellerbe told ESPN that Mayweather called from Las Vegas to the Philippines after earlier this month calling out southpaw Pacquiao on Twitter, making taunts, "Step Up, Punk," to the world welterweight champion.

"I can't say what exactly was said but I know," Ellerbe told ESPN. "Floyd has shown more than a willingness to get this fight done and this is really, really what he wants to do and what he wants to give to the fight fans."

Mayweather has spoken with Pacquiao adviser Michael Koncz several times in recent weeks, according to all reports.

Outdoor arena

Pacquiao, 54-3 with two draws and 32 knockouts, has won his past 15 fights over a span of nearly seven years while Mayweather, 42-0 with 26 knockouts, must serve a 90-day jail sentence starting June 1 after a domestic violence conviction.

Arum said that the issue of who Pacquiao would next fight would be resolved this coming week.

Arum, who is chair of Top Rank promotions, presented four other possible foes for "Pacman" as next opponents, including Puerto Rico's Miguel Cotto, Americans Lamont Peterson and Tim Bradley and Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez.

Arum earlier said a fight with Mayweather at the end of May or even early June would give the Filipino champion time to heal from a 29-stitch cut he suffered in his fight with Marquez last November.

That would also give time for a 45,000-seat outdoor arena to be built—more than twice the capacity of the MGM Grand Garden Arena, where Pacquiao has fought before. MGM Grand can hold some 17,000 people. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

DLX opens second season Feb. 11

The second season of the Domino Lux International Fraternity Basketball Invitational Friendship League will kick off on Feb. 15 at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

The 2012 edition of the annual DLX caging will feature 16 teams and teams have only until Jan. 25 to submit a copy of their roster. Entrance fee is only $400 and a cash prize await the champion of the second season. Blue Haus/ Satbahi won the inaugural season and took home $500.

Interested teams are requested to attend a meeting this Friday at the Gualo Rai court. Rules, game schedules, and other matters related to the league will be discussed at the meeting.

For more information about the DLX caging, contact Jojo Garon at 483-2939, Jeff Garcia at 898-6257, Pando Muleta at 888-7967, Rick Brien at 789-7620, or Francis Sarmiento at 285-8009. ***(PR)***

LG TWINS

From Page 28

time supporter of the team.

This year a group just shy of 40 players make up the Twins' bullpen staff. The team's pitchers and catchers have been participating in batting practice, running exercises, and situational baseball drills. They have constructed temporary protective nets at "Tan Ko" field to provide a safer training environment.

"We like coming back to Saipan because of the gracious hospitality we receive in the past and because the travel time from Seoul is relatively short," said LG Twins travel secretary J.D. Kim.

Kim added that the rest of the team is training in Okinawa, Japan. The bullpen group is expected to join the rest of the squad in Okinawa after the conclusion of the camp on Saipan.

"A lot of training camps are being held in Okinawa and we are preparing our pitchers here before gathering back together as a whole to participate in a number of exhibition games against other teams," he said.

By rule, each Korean team is allowed to field two foreign players on its roster.

The LG Twins have acquired a pair of pitchers in an effort to beef up their bullpen.

The team prides itself on explosive hitting, but is working on strengthening its pitching game in order to make the playoffs this season. The LG Twins lost three free agents this offseason after finishing at the bottom of the eight-team field last year.

Former AAA prospect for Major League Baseball's Cincinnati Reds, Benjamin Jukich, and former San Diego Padres flamethrower Radhames Liz of the Dominican Republic are the newest members of the squad.

According to Kim, Liz has been clocked at 102 mph, which is the fastest in the league.

The LG Twins also recruited Bong Jung-Keun to the bullpen back in 2008.

The Atlanta Braves recruited the lefty out of high school in 1998 and he also suited up for the Reds before signing with the LG Twins.

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Thea victorious in NZ debut

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior tennis player Thea Minor moved closer to gaining Junior ITF ranking points after winning her debut in the Sunsmart 18 & Under Summer Championships 2012 in New Zealand yesterday.

Minor played in the 64-player girls U18 singles draw and prevailed over the host's Brogan Maoate in two sets at the hardcourt of Ashburton Trust Tennis Centre in Ashburton. The Saipan Southern High School student pulled off a hard-earned 6-4 triumph in the opening set and had another tough win against the home bet in the second set, 6-5, to advance to the second round and book her first Junior ITF victory.

The Commonwealth netter faces Mexico's Carmen Araceli Cordoba in the Round of 32 today. Minor is the underdog in the second round match, as she will be facing a ranked opponent in Cordoba, who is seeded sixth in the tournament.

An upset over Cordoba will

See THEA on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Thea Minor, seen here waiting for a serve from her foe at the American Memorial Park tennis courts, won her debut in the Sunsmart 18 & Under Summer Championships 2012 in New Zealand yesterday.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

An LG Twins player, right, takes instructions from his coach during the team's spring training camp at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield last Friday.

LG Twins back on Saipan for spring training

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The LG Twins Baseball Club is back on island to undergo its three-week spring training camp. The team will be using the Oleai Sports Complex track and field as well as Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield until Feb. 1.

The LG Twins is a professional baseball team based in Seoul, Korea and is a member of the Korean Professional Baseball Organization. The team was founded in 1982 and since then has won a pair of league championships. It won the Korean Series titles in 1990 and 1994. A total of eight teams make up the Korean Professional Baseball League.

Derron Flores is assisting them during their trip. Flores is a local youth baseball staple and a Division of Sports and Recreation employee who has developed a trusted relationship with the team over the years.

His father, Mayor Donald Flores, has also been a long-

See LG TWINSon Page 27

Tsunami Saipan swimmers shatter 5 records

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tsunami Saipan swimmers marked last Saturday's All Island Invitational 1 with record-breaking times.

Setting CNMI age group records in the first of three-part series of small swim meets Tsunami Saipan is hosting at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi are Ryuto Yanai, Lukas Kang, Miku Tammy, Kaito Yanai, and Kensuke Kimura.

Ryuto Yanai raced in the boys U18 100m butterfly and submitted 1:22.17 to eclipse the 1:22.63 Kang recorded on Nov. 19, 2011. With the new record in the 100m butterfly, the younger Yanai now owns four CNMI age group marks in the boys U8. His three other records are in the 50m freestyle (33.65 seconds/Dec. 10, 2011), 100m freestyle (1:16.11/Nov. 12, 2011), and 200m freestyle (2:45.35/Dec. 10, 2011).

Kang, who is still credited for the most records in the boys U8 with his seven, moved up to the 9 to 10 age group this year and continue to crush swim marks. He logged 1:21.96 seconds in the 100m backstroke, about four seconds faster than the previous record (1:25.57) Kento Akimaru of Saipan Swim Club posted on Oct. 15, 2011.

Tammy is in the same 9 to

See TSUNAMI on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Miku Tammy goes for her second to the last lap in the 800m freestyle event during last Saturday's All Island Invitational 1 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kaito Yanai gets ready for the 100m backstroke race in last Saturday's All Island Invitational 1 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Mayweather confirms fight with Pacman

BOXING

LOS ANGELES—Floyd Mayweather Jr. has spoken to Filipino icon Manny Pacquiao by telephone to discuss a possible megafight next May, advisers to each fighter confirmed to several media outlets on Thursday.

Mayweather adviser Leonard Ellerbe confirmed the call to ESPN while Pacquiao promoter Bob Arum did the same to BoxingScene.com and Pacquiao himself talked with ABS-CBN in the Philippines about the short conversation.

The Philippine report quoted Pacquiao as saying there would be no problem if Mayweather would agree to a 50-50 split of income from what is expected to be the richest fight in boxing history—as much as $100 million—if it ever comes off.

Unbeaten US star Mayweather and Pacquiao, regarded as the

See MAYWEATHER on Page 27